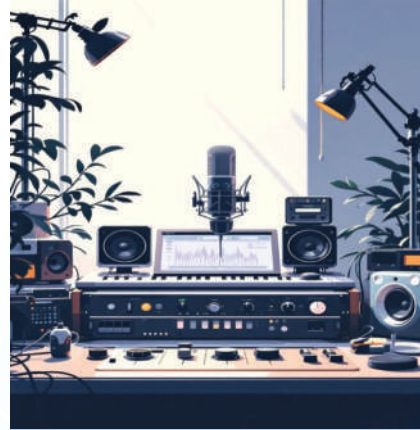


# Impact of Citizen Journalism and Community Radio on Mainstream Media: Bangladesh Perspective



April 2026



**National Institute of Mass Communication**

Ministry of Information & Broadcasting  
Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

# **Impact of Citizen Journalism and Community Radio on Mainstream Media: Bangladesh Perspective**

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## Declaration

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that this report is an original work of my research, authored by myself, and has not been previously submitted for any degree or formal project. Appropriate references have been provided for all supporting literature and resources.



Professor Dr. Md. Shafiqul Islam

April 2026

## Preface

The contemporary media ecosystem in Bangladesh is undergoing a paradigmatic shift, transitioning from a centralized, top-down structure toward a more fragmented and participatory landscape. This evolution is driven primarily by the proliferation of digital technologies and the institutionalization of localized broadcasting. This research serves as a critical inquiry into how these grassroots information channels are redefining the traditional roles of professional journalism and national news delivery.

Historically, the Bangladeshi media landscape was dominated by a few major television networks and broadsheet newspapers that acted as the primary gatekeepers of public discourse. However, the rise of citizen journalism—fueled by ubiquitous smartphone penetration—and the strategic expansion of community radio in rural corridors have challenged this hegemony. This study investigates the friction and synergy between these emerging entities and the established mainstream press, examining how democratized content creation influences national agendas and editorial standards.

A central focus of this research is the symbiotic tension between the speed of citizen-led digital reportage and the ethical rigor of traditional newsrooms. In the context of Bangladesh, citizen journalism has frequently acted as a "first responder" during socio-political upheavals and natural disasters. Furthermore, the study delves into the socio-technical impact of community radio as a tool for linguistic and cultural preservation. In a nation where regional dialects and marginalized concerns are often overshadowed by the "Dhaka-centric" narrative of mainstream media, community radio serves as a vital counter-public sphere.

I extend my sincere appreciation to Dr. Md. Shafiul Islam, Professor, Department of Public Administration, Rajshahi University, Bangladesh; Research Associate Sadia Khanom, Jagannath University, Dhaka; and the Institute of Policy Research (IPR) for their dedication and hard work. I also extend my gratitude to all concerned members of NIMC for their relentless efforts in completing this research.



Muhammad Hiruzzaman ndc  
Director General  
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Further, I would like to extend my gratitude to the participants and respondents who took part in this study in various capacities, including key informant interviews, questionnaire surveys, and focus group discussions. Their generous cooperation in providing valuable information has well contributed to making this report a worthy piece.

Finally, I am grateful to the NIMC authority for accepting my research proposal and providing funding to carry out this worthy research.

I am not above error. So, I beg pardon for any errors that may have happened unconsciously in this report.



**Professor Dr. Md. Shafiul Islam**

## Acronym

AI	Artificial Intelligence
BNNRC	Bangladesh NGOs Network for Radio and Communication
BTV	Bangladesh Television
CJ	Citizen Journalism
CR	Community Radio
CU	Chittagong University
DG	Director General
DU	Dhaka University
FB	Facebook
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
KII	Key Informant Interview
NGOs	Non-government organisation
NIMC	National Institute of Mass Communication
PIB	Press Institute of Bangladesh
PID	Press Information Department
QS	Questionnaire survey
RU	Rajshahi University
SKPA	Skills, Knowledge, Perception and Attitudes
SM	Social Media
TV	Television

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## Executive summary

This study, *“Impact of Citizen Journalism and Community Radio on Mainstream Media: Bangladesh Perspective,”* examines the evolving media ecosystem in Bangladesh, focusing on how citizen journalism (CJ) and community radio (CR) influence mainstream media practices, audience perceptions, and democratic communication. Conducted for the National Institute of Mass Communication (NIMC), the research adopts a mixed-methods approach to generate evidence-based insights for policymakers, media practitioners, and development stakeholders.

The primary objective of the study is to assess the extent to which citizen journalism and community radio shape mainstream media content, framing practices, and audience engagement. It also evaluates issues of credibility, ethics, and institutional integration, while proposing policy directions for strengthening media pluralism and participatory communication. The research covers both urban and rural contexts across Bangladesh, with particular focus on Dhaka and Rajshahi divisions. However, the study employs a cross-sectional mixed-methods design integrating (i) a survey of 75 respondents representing diverse media users, (ii) 24 key informant interviews with journalists, editors, regulators, and community radio practitioners, (iii) focus group discussions, (v) content analysis, and (vi) case studies and content analysis of mainstream media. Quantitative data were analysed using statistical techniques while qualitative data were examined through thematic and framing analysis. The study is grounded in Framing Theory.

The study reveals that, in Bangladesh, the media landscape has evolved significantly due to the rise of citizen journalism, spurred by increased internet access and smartphone use, particularly through platforms like Facebook. This allows individuals to quickly report local incidents and highlight overlooked social or political issues. Meanwhile, community radio, introduced in 2010, serves grassroots populations by focusing on local development and community concerns but has expanded slowly due to various limitations.

Perceptions of citizen journalism and community radio vary. Citizen journalism is valued for its speed and immediacy but often faces skepticism over credibility due to misinformation and lack of professional oversight. Community radio, in contrast, enjoys higher trust levels,

especially in rural areas, due to its focus on community engagement. Audiences are increasingly aware of misinformation risks and verify content across media platforms, with educational background influencing media perception.

Citizen journalism's influence on mainstream media is episodic, often linked to significant events like political crises and disasters, occasionally shaping public discourse. However, this influence is inconsistent and not systematically integrated into mainstream media. Community radio has limited impact on mainstream narratives due to its regional focus and resource constraints.

The media environment is fragmented, with citizen journalism offering rapid, emotion-driven narratives, while community radio focuses on localized concerns. Mainstream media maintains dominant frames influenced by professional practices and political agendas, leading to a weak integration of grassroots perspectives.

Finally, this study concludes that while citizen journalism and community radio have introduced important dimensions of inclusivity, participation, and immediacy into Bangladesh's media landscape, their overall impact on mainstream media remains limited and uneven. Citizen journalism exerts occasional influence through agenda-setting, whereas community radio maintains strong local credibility but limited national reach.

For Bangladesh to achieve a more pluralistic, democratic, and responsive media ecosystem, deliberate policy intervention, institutional collaboration, and capacity development are essential. The findings provide actionable insights for the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting to design forward-looking media policies that balance innovation, accountability, and inclusivity.

# Chapter One

## Introduction

The emergence of citizen journalism and community radio in Bangladesh has dramatically altered the country's media landscape, showcasing a significant shift towards inclusivity and participatory information sharing. Citizen journalism allows everyday individuals to engage in the reporting process, breaking down barriers traditionally upheld by professional journalists. This shift is particularly important in rural and marginalised communities, where access to mainstream media is often limited.

Researchers Hossain (2014) and Rashid & Kabir (2018) highlight that these platforms empower citizens to take an active role in disseminating information, thus expanding the notion of journalism beyond the confines of established media organisations. The proliferation of digital technologies and the widespread use of social media further facilitate this transformation. As Hasan (2020) notes, ordinary citizens can now document local stories and share experiences that mainstream outlets may overlook. This capability has democratised the flow of information, allowing diverse voices and narratives to emerge in the public discourse.

Community radio, which was officially launched in Bangladesh in 2010, has significantly contributed to this landscape. It serves as an important platform for promoting social awareness and accountability, fostering a sense of community, and enabling inclusive communication (Saha, 2019). Unlike traditional media, which often caters to the interests of urban elites, community radio stations focus on local issues—ranging from agricultural concerns to climate change and disaster preparedness—thus addressing the specific needs of their audiences.

However, despite the promising role of these grassroots media initiatives, the extent to which they influence mainstream media practices, editorial policies, and journalistic standards remains relatively unexamined—a gap that Rahman (2021) identifies as critical for research.

This study aims to explore how citizen journalism and community radio impact the content-setting of mainstream media in Bangladesh. By investigating these influences, the research will shed light on how traditional media might be adapting to the rise of alternative forms of journalism. In particular, this investigation will focus on the interplay among citizen journalism, community radio, and mainstream media. It will scrutinise whether mainstream media have become more responsive to the narratives and concerns highlighted by these grassroots platforms.

Moreover, understanding this relationship is essential for assessing whether the rise of citizen journalism and community radio represents a transformative force in media practices or merely coexists alongside traditional media without leading to substantial change. As this study unfolds, it will examine the specific mechanisms by which citizen journalism and community radio can shape the editorial direction and coverage priorities of mainstream news outlets.

By addressing these facets, the research will contribute valuable insights into the evolving media landscape in Bangladesh, offering a nuanced understanding of how these alternative media forms are reshaping public discourse and possibly paving the way for a more inclusive media environment.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Alternative media platforms, such as community radio stations, are increasingly recognised as vital actors that support development and help achieve sustainable development goals at the local level in the global south (Moffat et al., 2025). In Bangladesh, the media landscape is evolving, with community radio expanding its reach (MRDI, 2015). These radios address a wide range of issues, including agriculture, climate change, disaster preparedness, and education (Rahman, 2023). Over the past twenty years, citizen journalism has gained momentum, particularly through social media platforms such as Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter (Motin, 2025; Simons, 2025). This growth has been driven by the limitations of traditional media, which are often constrained by political and corporate interests. While mainstream media may avoid controversial topics or strive for balanced coverage, citizen journalism becomes more active and impactful.

Nevertheless, the actual influence of these platforms on mainstream media practices and public perceptions remains unclear and poorly understood. While these alternative media forms have the potential to democratise information dissemination and amplify diverse voices, important questions persist about how they interact with mainstream media. Specifically, it is essential to assess the extent to which mainstream media have adapted their editorial practices, policies, and content in response to the rise of citizen journalism and community radio. This adaptation is vital, as it could signal a move towards a more inclusive media environment that emphasises representation beyond traditional political and commercial interests. Furthermore, understanding audience perceptions is crucial. How do different demographics perceive the credibility and influence of citizen journalism and community radio compared to mainstream news outlets? Examining these perceptions can reveal much about changing trust dynamics within the media ecosystem and the factors affecting the credibility of various media sources. For instance, while some may see citizen journalism as a more authentic and immediate form of reporting, others might question its reliability compared to established news organisations. Additionally, it is important to recognise the challenges faced by citizen journalism and community radio, including ethical dilemmas, regulatory hurdles, credibility concerns, and resource constraints (Rahman, 2024). These challenges hinder the positive impacts these platforms could otherwise achieve. Addressing these issues is essential to ensure that citizen journalism and community radio can make meaningful contributions to the media landscape. Moreover, the role of these alternative media in promoting democratic participation, giving voice to marginalised communities, and fostering media pluralism cannot be overlooked (Alam, 2015). Evaluating their collective influence on these key aspects of democracy is crucial to understanding their potential to reshape public discourse and empower marginalised groups. Despite the increasing significance of these media forms, mainstream media in Bangladesh remains predominantly controlled by urban elites, political biases, and commercial interests. This raises urgent questions about whether citizen journalism and community radio are genuinely transforming media pluralism or simply existing alongside it without meaningful interaction. The lack of empirical research

into these complex dynamics leaves policymakers, media practitioners, and scholars without sufficient evidence to develop strategies supporting citizen journalism and community radio, establish appropriate regulatory frameworks, or help mainstream media adapt positively to this changing landscape (Khan et al., 2022). To bridge this knowledge gap, urgent and comprehensive research is needed to explore how citizen journalism and community radio can collaboratively foster a more inclusive and pluralistic media environment in Bangladesh. Such studies will not only illuminate the realities of the media ecosystem but also provide valuable insights for stakeholders committed to cultivating a more democratic and representative media landscape.

### Rationale of the Study

The rationale lies in understanding the dynamic relationship between traditional and alternative media in promoting inclusive communication. This study contributes to media and communication scholarship by providing empirical insights into the impact of grassroots media practices on mainstream journalism. Furthermore, it has policy implications for promoting media diversity and supporting participatory communication in developing contexts like Bangladesh. Specifically, this study is important for several reasons, which are mentioned below:

- **Scholarly contribution:** It fills a gap by comparing the effects of citizen journalism and community radio on mainstream media in Bangladesh, integrating both quantitative and qualitative data, with theoretical sophistication.
- **Media practice:** Helps mainstream media understand and adapt to changing media landscapes—what to adopt, what to guard against—in terms of content, framing, ethics, and audience engagement.
- **Policy and regulation:** Findings could inform media regulatory authorities in Bangladesh (e.g. Bangladesh Press Council, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting) about how to develop guidelines or support frameworks for citizen journalism and community radio while ensuring accountability and freedom of expression.
- **Democratic good:** By understanding how citizen journalism and community radio affect inclusion of voices, transparency, and participation, the study supports democratic processes in Bangladesh.
- **Audience benefit:** Insights into trust, credibility, and media use can help improve media literacy, help audiences better navigate different sources, thereby strengthening informed citizenship.

## Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this study is to analyse the impact of citizen journalism and community radio on mainstream media in Bangladesh. However, there are some specific objectives for conducting this study. It includes:

- ❖ To analyse the media platforms changing trend in Bangladesh.
- ❖ To explore the audience's perception regarding the credibility and influence of citizen journalism and community radio vs mainstream media.
- ❖ To investigate how citizen journalism and community radio impact the practices and contents of mainstream media in Bangladesh.
- ❖ To evaluate the ethical challenges faced by the citizen journalists and community radio practitioners in the country.
- ❖ To propose policy recommendations for integrating citizen journalism and community radio into the national media development strategy.

## Research Question of the Study

To realise the objectives, some research questions have been crafted. The research questions include:

- How have citizen journalism and community radio in Bangladesh evolved in terms of platforms and practices?
- How do audiences perceive the credibility and influence of citizen journalism and community radio compared to mainstream media in Bangladesh?
- How do citizen journalism and community radio influence the practices and content of mainstream media in Bangladesh?
- What ethical and credibility challenges are encountered by citizen journalism and community radio in their news-gathering and dissemination processes?
- What strategic policy frameworks can enhance media pluralism and ensure sustainable synergy among all media sectors?

## Literature Review & Key Study Issues

Several scholars have highlighted the growing relevance of citizen journalism in promoting participatory communication (Allan, 2013; Goode, 2009). It allows citizens to become active producers rather than passive consumers of information (Gillmor, 2004). In Bangladesh, studies by Islam (2015) and Rahman (2019) have shown that citizen-led reporting has influenced local governance and social change initiatives. Similarly,

community radio has served as a platform for empowering rural populations through localised content (Hossain & Rahman, 2020). Community radio has been globally recognised for fostering civic engagement and amplifying underrepresented voices (Lewis & Mitchell, 2014). Theoretical discussions around the “Public Sphere” (Habermas, 1989) and “Participatory Communication” (Freire, 1970) frameworks also underline the democratizing potential of grassroots media. However, mainstream media in Bangladesh still dominate in shaping public discourse, often marginalising citizen-generated content. Recent research (Hasan & Ahmed, 2022) suggests an evolving but uneven relationship between citizen journalism and traditional media institutions.

### **Key issues of the study**

The following outlines the key existing works related to citizen journalism, community radio, and their interactions with mainstream media, both globally and within Bangladesh.

### **Citizen Journalism: Global & Theoretical Foundations**

**Wang (2023)** in *“The Rise of Citizen Journalism: Opportunities and Challenges”* describes how digital technologies and social media have opened spaces for ordinary citizens to contribute news content, diversifying the news landscape, while highlighting challenges like misinformation, credibility, and ethical issues. The paper reviews theoretical bases including civil society theory, participatory culture theory, public sphere theory, and audience theory.

**Campbell (2014)** in *“Theorizing Citizenship in Citizen Journalism”* analyses how citizen journalism interacts with theories of citizenship, seeing it as both a tool for citizenship and a form of citizenship in its own right. This provides theoretical depth to understanding how citizens engage media beyond being passive consumers.

### **Community Radio**

*“Community Radios in Bangladesh: Change Maker at the Grassroots Society”* (Rahman, 2023) provides empirical evidence of how community radios in Bangladesh contribute to grassroots governance and development, particularly in rural settings. The study highlights that community radio stations help in informing local communities, fostering participation, and serving as voices for underrepresented populations.

### **Citizen Journalism & Mainstream Media Interaction in Bangladesh**

- *“Practices of and Challenges for Citizen Journalism in the Mainstream Media of Bangladesh”* by Khan, Mehjabin, and Rashid (2022) examines how citizen journalism interacts with and influences mainstream media in Bangladesh. It finds

that citizen journalism has pushed mainstream media to adapt, especially online platforms, but it raises concerns of credibility, adherence to journalistic norms, and potential threats to professional journalism.

- The study *“The Impact of Citizen Journalism on Campus Reporting”* (Uddin, 2021) focuses on campus journalists in Bangladesh and shows how citizen journalism through social media has affected campus news gathering and reporting, though with issues of bias, inaccuracy, and gatekeeping.

The reviewed literature highlights the evolving landscape of citizen journalism and community radio, emphasising their roles in democratising information and fostering public participation. Globally, scholars such as Wang (2023) and Campbell (2014) explore citizen journalism through theoretical lenses of civil society, participatory culture, and citizenship, identifying both its empowering potential and challenges of credibility and ethics. In Bangladesh, community radio has emerged as a grassroots platform promoting inclusive communication and local governance (Rahman, 2023). Studies by Khan, Mehjabin, and Rashid (2022) reveal that citizen journalism is reshaping mainstream media practices while raising concerns about professionalism and reliability. Similarly, Uddin (2021) notes that social media–driven campus journalism enhances student engagement but struggles with accuracy and editorial control. Overall, these works underscore a dynamic interplay between citizen-led and institutional media in advancing participatory communication.

### **Gaps found in the literature**

The key gaps from the literature include the following:

- ❖ Comparative studies between citizen journalism and community radio in their effects on mainstream media are limited.
- ❖ Few longitudinal studies cover how mainstream media adapt over time in Bangladesh in response to citizen journalism and community radio.
- ❖ Detailed empirical data about audience perceptions of trust, credibility, and influence are few and far between, especially those linking community radio, citizen journalism, and mainstream media.
- ❖ Ethical frameworks specific to the Bangladesh context—norms, regulations, etc.—are less developed.
- ❖ Less is known about the institutional mechanisms (e.g., editorial policy changes, regulatory responses) mainstream media employ in response to these newer media forms.

# Chapter Two

## Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework is the foundation for understanding and analyzing the key concepts and principles related to a specific research topic. It guides the research design, informing the methodologies and approaches used to address the research questions and objectives. There are a numbers of theories related to the study issue. Among them, the following are notable.

1. **Public Sphere Theory** (Habermas, 1964 & 1974)

This theory is useful for conceptualising how media (including citizen journalism and community radio) contribute to democratic discourse, providing spaces for public deliberation and participation and for voices ordinarily marginalized by mainstream media. The idea is that citizen journalism and community radio can expand or reshape the public sphere in Bangladesh.

2. **Participatory Communication Theory by Paulo Freire (1970)**

This theory advocates dialogue-based, inclusive, and democratic communication, where participants engage as equals in creating and sharing knowledge. It promotes empowerment and critical consciousness, enabling people—especially the marginalized—to understand and transform their social realities. Ultimately, it calls for participation and collective action to achieve genuine social change.

3. **Framing Theory** (Entman, 1993; Gitlin, 1980.)

The framing theory suggests that the way media present issues—the selection, emphasis, and exclusion of certain aspects—influences how audiences understand and interpret them. This theory helps analyse how mainstream media adapt their framing in response to content or narratives introduced by citizen journalism and community radio and probe whether frames from citizen journalism/community radio are adopted or rejected by mainstream.

#### 4. **Uses and Gratifications Theory (2022)**

This theory helps understand why audiences turn to citizen journalism or community radio instead of or in addition to mainstream media: what needs (information, identity, participation, entertainment, etc.) are being fulfilled that mainstream media may not fully address.

#### 5. **Hierarchy of Influences Model (Shoemaker & Reese, 2013 & 2019)**

This model allows understanding the multiple levels that influence media content: from macro (social systems, political, economic) to meso (media organizations) to micro (journalists, routines). It is suitable for exploring how citizen journalism and community radio exert influence, and how mainstream media are influenced.

### **Comparative discussion of the theories**

This study, titled *“Impact of Citizen Journalism and Community Radio on Mainstream Media: Bangladesh Perspective,”* seeks to understand how alternative media forms—citizen journalism and community radio—interact with, influence, and reshape mainstream media practices, narratives, and audience perceptions.

#### **Public Sphere Theory**

The Public Sphere Theory provides the study’s foundational perspective. It conceptualizes media as spaces for rational-critical debate and democratic participation among citizens. In Bangladesh, citizen journalism and community radio have expanded these deliberative spaces, allowing marginalized voices to participate in public discourse that mainstream media often overlook. This theory helps assess how these grassroots media initiatives create alternative public spheres that either complement or challenge elite-controlled mainstream narratives, thereby promoting pluralism and accountability in communication.

#### **Participatory Communication Theory**

Participatory Communication Theory emphasizes dialogue, empowerment, and social transformation through communication. It aligns closely with the nature of community radio and citizen journalism, where individuals engage as equal participants in producing and sharing knowledge. This theory explains how these media foster inclusivity and collective action, particularly within rural and underrepresented communities in

Bangladesh. By encouraging bottom-up communication, this framework underscores the transformative potential of participatory media in deepening democratic communication processes.

### **Framing Theory**

Framing Theory is directly relevant to the study *“Impact of Citizen Journalism and Community Radio on Mainstream Media: Bangladesh Perspective”* because it provides a conceptual lens to analyze how meanings are constructed, negotiated, and contested across different media forms. The study aims to explore how citizen journalism and community radio influence the content and practices of mainstream media, and framing theory explains this influence through the process of issue selection and interpretation.

Therefore, framing theory is highly relevant to this study because it focuses on how issues are constructed, interpreted, and communicated through media narratives. In this study, it can help analyze how citizen journalists and community radio practitioners frame local issues, social injustices, or development concerns—and how these frames are later adopted, contested, or ignored by mainstream media. Since one of the research objectives involves examining the *impact on content diversity and agenda-setting*, framing theory provides the conceptual tools to study changes in media discourse and storytelling techniques. It also helps evaluate whether alternative media challenge dominant media frames (e.g., urban bias, elite-centric narratives) by offering counter-discourses rooted in community perspectives.

### **Best-Fit Theoretical Framework and Justification of relevance:**

#### **Explaining Differences in Media Narratives:**

Citizen journalism and community radio often highlight local, marginalized, or community-based concerns that are underrepresented in mainstream media. Framing theory allows the researcher to examine how these alternative narratives are presented—what aspects are emphasized, what language is used, and how these differ from the dominant frames used by national or commercial media outlets.

**Assessing Mainstream Media Adaptation:**

One of the study's objectives is to analyze whether mainstream media adopt or modify their reporting in response to citizen or community-driven stories. Framing theory helps reveal how mainstream media incorporate or reshape these grassroots frames, for instance, whether they reinforce official perspectives or accommodate alternative voices emerging from community media.

**Understanding Audience Interpretation:**

Frames guide audience perception. Through this theory, the study can examine how audiences perceive issues differently when exposed to citizen journalism or community radio compared to traditional news outlets. This is particularly important in Bangladesh, where media trust and credibility are contested.

**Analysing Power and Representation:**

Framing theory also uncovers who controls the narrative. It helps identify whether citizen and community media succeed in challenging elite or political dominance in news framing, thereby contributing to democratizing the media landscape.

Therefore, the Framing Theory is relevant for this study because it helps assess how citizen journalism and community radio influence the content and style of mainstream media reporting, how different narratives emerge and interact, and how framing practices ultimately impact public understanding and democratic communication in Bangladesh.

So, the Framing Theory has considered as the theoretical basis of this study, as it provides a coherent and multidimensional foundation for assessing how citizen journalism and community radio influence the content, practices, narratives, and public communication of mainstream media in Bangladesh.

# Chapter Three

## Methodology

A mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative and qualitative methods, was used to capture measurable patterns and deeper, context-rich insights.

### Research Design

- Cross-sectional design with comparative aspects
- **Components:**
  1. Audience survey to understand perceptions, trust, usage patterns, influence, and comparisons among media types.
  2. Key informant interviews (KIIs) with stakeholders: editors, journalists in mainstream media, managers of community radio stations, citizen journalists, regulators, and media policy experts.
  3. Focus group discussion (FGD) with stakeholders, including community radio professionals and citizen journalists, to understand cross-cutting issues.
  4. Content analysis was done to explore media influence
  5. Case studies of selected community radio stations and citizen journalism instances (e.g., successful campaigns, controversies) to examine dynamics in depth.

### Sampling

- **Audience (survey):** Stratified sampling based on geography (urban/rural), demographic variables (age, education, gender), and media usage habits.

**Table 1 Number of respondents and category for survey**

Category of respondents	Number of respondents
Community radio listeners club members (Raj-5+Munshiganj-5)	10
General listeners (BD Betar) (Raj-5+Munshiganj-5)	10
BD Betar listeners club members-Rajshahi Division	05
General Mass People TV viewers (BTV & Private TV)	20
Citizen journalists (5+5)	10
Community Radio practitioners (5+5)	10
General Mass people newspaper readers	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>75</b>

- **Key informants:** Purposive sampling to include diverse voices: editors, senior journalists, citizen journalists, community radio station managers, regulators.

Table 2 Number of respondents and categories key informant interview

Category	Number of respondents
Editors- (National daily/...)	2
News Editors/CR (TV media)	2
BTV-Raj/Dhaka	1
BD Betar- Raj/Dhaka	1
Journalists- DRU/Press Club	5
Community Radio station managers (Raj+Munshiganj)	2
Citizen Journalists (Dhaka-3 + Raj-3)	6
Policy level Regulators	2
Media Policy expert (BNRRC-1)	1
Academic (DU+RU)	2
Total	24

### Sources of Data and Data Collection

Both the sources—primary and secondary will be consulted to gather data for this study. It includes:

- **Primary data:**
  - Survey responses from audiences.
  - Interviews with stakeholders (journalists, editors, citizen journalists, community radio managers, regulators).
  - Case study data (documents, reports, actual programming content).
- **Secondary data:**
  - Scholarly articles, books, theses related to citizen journalism, community radio, media theory.
  - Media policy documents in Bangladesh (legislation, regulation, guidelines).
  - Reports, grey literature (reports by media watchdogs) on media usage and media impact in Bangladesh.
  - Statistical reports (e.g., from Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, government agencies) for demographics, media reach, and digital penetration.

### Data Analysis

To analyse data, software like STATA, MS Excel, and so on is used.

- **Quantitative analysis:** descriptive statistics, correlation, chi-square test, etc.
- **Qualitative analysis:** thematic analysis of interview transcripts; discourse or framing analysis in content study; comparative case study synthesis.

### Ethical Consideration

The following issues will be ensured to maintain ethical standards for this study.

- **Informed consent:** All survey respondents and interviewees were clearly informed about the purpose of the research, their rights, anonymization of data, and that the data will be used only for research.

- **Anonymity & confidentiality:** Identities of individuals who request anonymity were be protected; data are stored securely.
- **Avoiding harm:** Particularly with citizen journalists or radio station operators who might be vulnerable politically, ensure that their participation does not expose them to risk.
- **Accuracy and honesty:** Ensure that data is collected and reported honestly, including contradictory findings.
- **Cultural sensitivity:** Be aware of local cultural norms, language, and sensitivities in rural or marginalized communities.

### Beneficiaries of the Research

The study will benefit media professionals, policymakers, communication researchers, and NGOs working on participatory media. It will also enhance academic understanding of media democratisation in Bangladesh. Specifically,

- Media practitioners (editors, journalists): understanding how to adapt practices, ethical norms, and audience expectations.
- Citizen journalists & community radio operators: insights into how to increase credibility, influence, and potentially collaborate with mainstream media.
- Regulators and policy makers: evidence for crafting supportive but responsible media regulation.
- Academics and researchers: filling literature gaps, offering frameworks and empirical data.
- General public and audience: improved media quality, more inclusive coverage, better media literacy.
- NGOs and civil society organizations: can use findings to support participatory media, democratization.

### Scope of the Research

- **Geographical scope:** Bangladesh; it includes both urban and rural regions; selection of community radio stations across different divisions (Dhaka and Rajshahi divisions) allows diversity.
- **Audience scope:** General adult population (18+), with stratification by education, urban/rural, gender etc.
- **Limitations:** The study does not cover every community radio station in Bangladesh; findings may not be generalised to extreme peripheries, but would create strong arguments; resource constraints limit sample size.

## Chapter Four

### Data Presentation and Discussion

This chapter draws on survey findings, a key informant interview (KII) with a senior media professional, case studies, content analysis, and focus group discussions to offer a rich exploration of the dynamics among citizen journalism, community radio, and mainstream media in Bangladesh. Using a thematic analysis grounded in Framing Theory, the chapter seeks to clarify how these alternative media forms shape and interact with traditional media outlets. The analysis is organised around several major themes that emerged from the interview, case studies and content analysis, each revealing distinct insights into the transformative role of citizen journalism and community radio. These themes are supported by interpretive narratives that capture the nuances of the respondent's experiences and viewpoints. For instance, the interviewee may discuss the growing accessibility of technology and its impact on grassroots reporting, illustrating how citizen journalists can play a crucial role in highlighting local issues that mainstream media often overlook. Additionally, illustrative quotes from the interview vividly convey the senior media professional's perspective on the evolving media landscape. This includes anecdotes that highlight the challenges faced by community radio stations and the resilience of citizen journalists in advocating for marginalised voices. Through this comprehensive examination, the chapter not only illuminates the influence of alternative media on mainstream practices but also reflects on the broader implications for democracy and public discourse in Bangladesh.

Overall, the chapter aims to contribute to the media studies literature by offering an in-depth analysis of the interplay among various media forms, thereby enhancing our understanding of the current media ecosystem in Bangladesh.

#### Quantitative Data Presentation and Discussion

This section presents quantitative findings from the survey data, focusing on relationships among demographic variables, media usage patterns, audience perceptions, and the influence of citizen journalism (CJ) and community radio (CR) on mainstream media. The analysis employs Chi-square tests and Mann–Whitney U tests to examine associations and

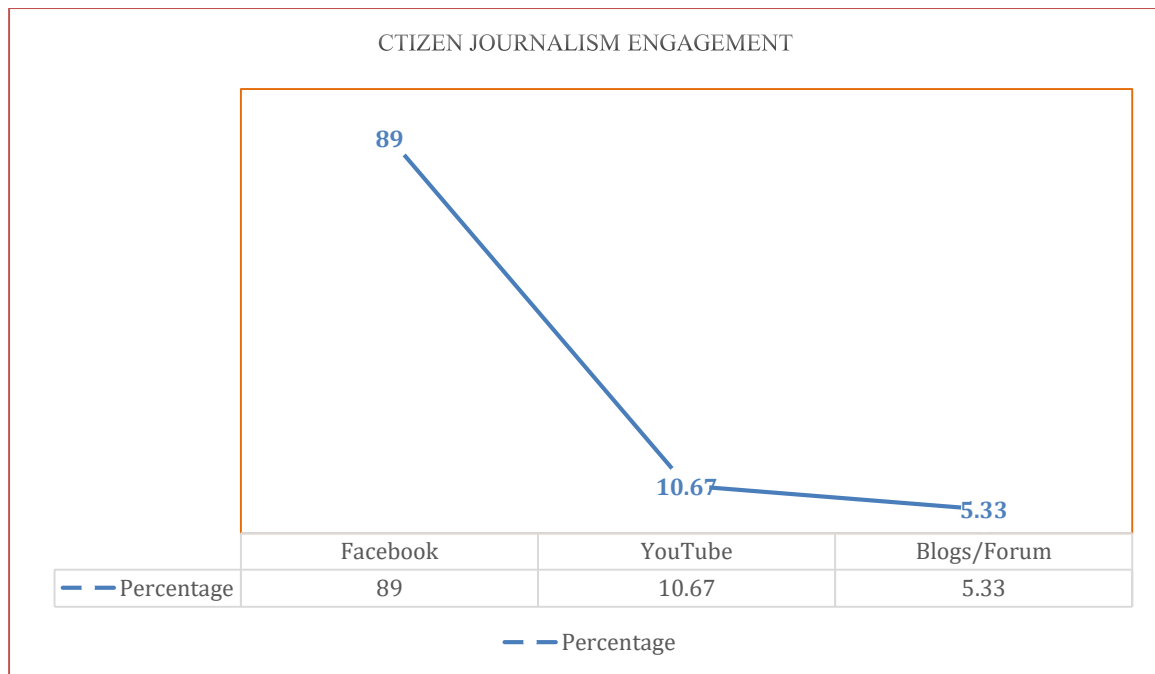
differences across key variables. The findings are interpreted in line with the study's objectives and research questions, particularly those concerning audience perception, credibility, and media influence.

### Citizen Journalism Engagement

Figure 1 shows the main platforms through which respondents engage in citizen journalism. The findings indicate that Facebook dominates citizen journalism participation at 89%, making it the preferred medium for sharing local news, opinions, events, and public concerns. In contrast, only 10.67% use YouTube, while 5.33% participate through blogs or online forums.

This shows that social media—particularly Facebook—has become the primary gateway for citizen journalism because of its accessibility, ease of content sharing, live-streaming capabilities, and rapid reach. The low use of blogs and forums suggests that traditional user-generated content platforms are losing relevance compared with interactive social media channels.

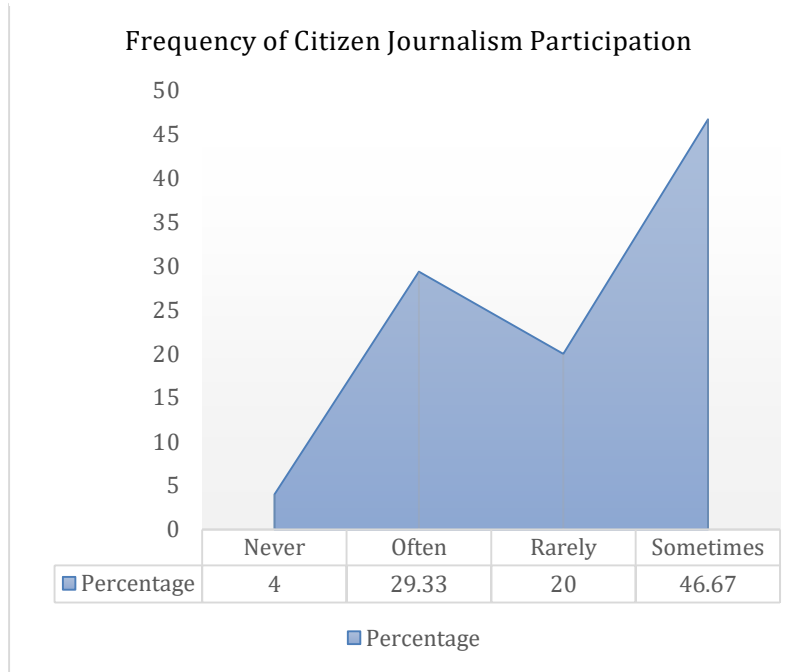
Figure 1 Citizen journalism engagement



### Frequency of Citizen Journalism Participation

Figure 2 presents how frequently respondents participate in citizen journalism activities.

Figure 2 Frequency of citizen journalism



The largest proportion of respondents (46.67%) reported participating sometimes, followed by 29.33% who often engage, and 20% who rarely participate. Only 4% stated that they never engage in citizen journalism.

These findings suggest that citizen journalism has become a regular but not always consistent activity

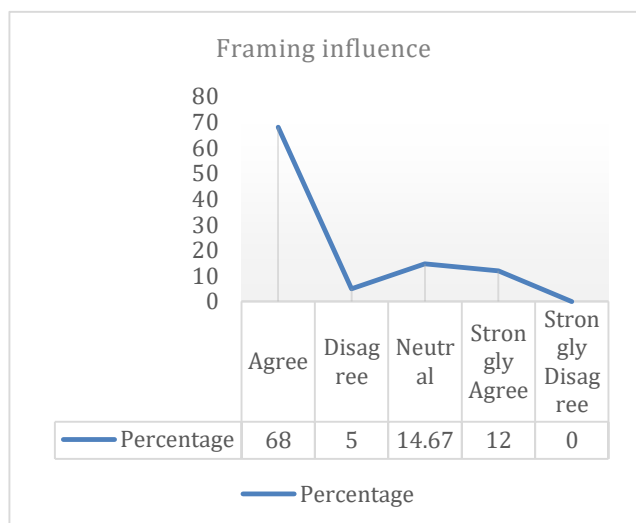
among users. Many individuals participate when significant local events, emergencies, or social issues arise. This indicates that citizen

journalism functions as a situational communication tool, activated especially when mainstream media coverage is absent or delayed.

Figure 3 Framing influence of citizen journalism

### Frames Presented by Citizen Journalism Influence

Figure 3 measures whether citizen journalism influences public perception regarding suitable solutions to community problems. A majority of



respondents (68%) agreed that frames presented by citizen journalism shape their views on whether issues should be solved through community action or government

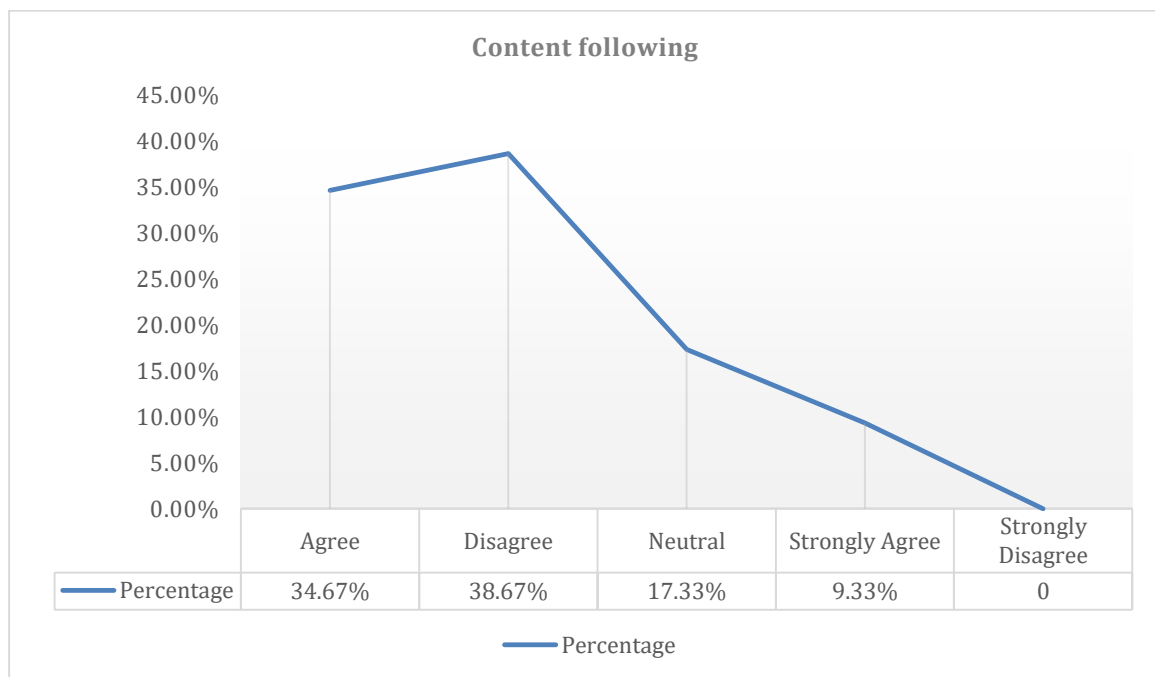
intervention. Additionally, 12% strongly agreed, while 14.67% remained neutral. Only 5% disagreed, and none strongly disagreed.

This suggests that citizen journalism does more than merely report events—it also influences public thinking and problem-solving approaches. Through framing local problems in specific ways, citizen journalism can mobilize community participation or increase demands for state accountability.

**Content Following**

Figure 4 appears to examine respondents’ tendency to selectively follow citizen journalism content. The results show that 38.67% disagreed, while 34.67% agreed. Another 17.33% remained neutral, and 9.33% strongly agreed, whereas no respondents strongly disagreed. These findings reveal mixed audience behaviour regarding selective exposure to citizen journalism content. While some respondents actively choose content aligned with their interests or beliefs, others appear less selective. This reflects the broader digital media environment, where users consume news based on relevance, ideology, locality, or trust in the source.

Figure 4 Content following



## Socio-Demographic Characteristics and engagement of citizen journalism

Understanding the socio-demographic background of respondents is vital for analysing media perceptions, usage patterns, and influence mechanisms. The sample characteristics—such as gender, residence, education, and age—directly influence how individuals engage with citizen journalism, community radio, and mainstream media. Table-1 is explained in the following sections.

Table 3 Demographic data of the survey respondents

Category		Frequency (%)
Gender	Female	34 (45.33%)
	Male	41 (54.67%)
Residence	Peri-urban	27 (36.00%)
	Rural	13 (17.33%)
	Urban	35 (46.67%)
Education	Bachelor	41 (54.67%)
	Higher Secondary	7 (9.33%)
	Masters	19 (25.33%)
	No formal education	4 (5.33%)
	Secondary	4 (5.33%)
Area of residence	Dhaka Division	35(46.47%)
	Rajshahi Division	40 (53.33%)
Age Group	18-24	6 (8.00%)
	25-30	44 (58.67)
	31-45	19 (25.33%)
	46 and above	6 (8.00%)

### Gender Distribution

The sample consists of 45.33% female respondents (n=34) and 54.67% male respondents (n=41). The gender distribution is relatively balanced, with a slight predominance of male respondents. This balance ensures that the findings reflect perspectives from both genders without significant bias.

In relation to the study objectives, this distribution allows for meaningful comparison of media exposure and engagement across gender. As observed in the statistical analysis, while media access is similar across genders, differences exist in the level of engagement with content. Therefore, the gender composition of the sample supports a reliable interpretation of such behavioural differences.

### **Place of Residence**

Respondents are distributed across urban (46.67%), peri-urban (36.00%), and rural (17.33%) areas.

The inclusion of respondents from diverse residential contexts enhances the representativeness of the study. A relatively higher proportion of urban respondents reflects the concentration of media access and digital infrastructure in urban areas. However, the inclusion of peri-urban and rural respondents is particularly important for capturing the role of community radio and grassroots media.

From the perspective of the research objectives, this distribution enables a comparative understanding of:

- Media accessibility across locations
- Differences in reliance on mainstream media versus community-based media
- Variations in perception of credibility and influence

The presence of rural respondents is especially relevant, as community radio is more prominent in such contexts and plays a key role in local communication.

### **Educational Qualification**

The majority of respondents hold a Bachelor's degree (54.67%), followed by Master's degree holders (25.33%). Smaller proportions have Higher Secondary education (9.33%), Secondary education (5.33%), or no formal education (5.33%).

The sample is predominantly well-educated, with over 80% of respondents having tertiary-level education. This has important implications for the interpretation of findings.

Education is a critical determinant of:

- Media literacy
- Ability to verify information
- Perception of credibility
- Awareness of ethical issues in media

The statistical analysis further confirms that education significantly varies by area and influences media perception. Therefore, the dominance of educated respondents suggests that the findings reflect a relatively informed audience group, which may demonstrate higher critical engagement with media content.

However, the inclusion of respondents with lower or no formal education ensures that the perspectives of less privileged groups—who are often key beneficiaries of community radio—are also represented.

### **Regional Distribution (Area of Residence)**

Respondents are drawn from two major divisions: Dhaka Division (46.67%) and Rajshahi Division (53.33%).

The near-equal representation from these two divisions allows for a balanced regional comparison. Dhaka Division represents a more urbanized and media-saturated environment, while Rajshahi Division includes more rural and semi-urban contexts.

This distribution is particularly relevant for examining:

- Differences in media access and usage
- The role of community radio in less urbanized regions
- The spread and influence of citizen journalism across regions

Such regional diversity strengthens the external validity of the study and allows for broader generalization within the Bangladesh context.

### **Age Distribution**

The majority of respondents fall within the 25–30 age group (58.67%), followed by 31–45 (25.33%), while younger (18–24) and older (46+) groups each constitute 8.00%.

The sample is heavily concentrated in the young adult demographic, which is typically the most active group in digital media usage and citizen journalism.

This has several implications:

- Higher engagement with social media platforms
- Greater exposure to citizen-generated content
- Increased likelihood of participation in information sharing

At the same time, the inclusion of older age groups allows for comparison of generational differences in media trust and usage patterns.

From the perspective of the research objectives, age plays a significant role in shaping:

- Media consumption habits
- Trust in traditional versus alternative media
- Adaptability to new media technologies

### **Overall Implications for the Study**

The socio-demographic profile of respondents reveals several important patterns:

1. **Balanced Gender Representation:**  
Enables meaningful analysis of gender-based differences in engagement and perception.
2. **Diverse Residential Background:**  
Captures urban–rural variations in media access and reliance on different media forms.
3. **High Educational Attainment:**  
Suggests relatively high media literacy, influencing trust, verification, and critical evaluation.
4. **Regional Diversity:**  
Allows comparative insights between more and less urbanised divisions.
5. **Youth-Dominated Sample:**  
Reflects the central role of younger populations in driving citizen journalism and digital media consumption.

### **Link to Research Objectives**

These socio-demographic characteristics directly support the study objectives by:

- Providing a basis for analysing audience perception of credibility and influence
- Explaining variations in media usage and engagement
- Contextualising the impact of citizen journalism and community radio
- Enabling interpretation of differences observed in quantitative and qualitative findings

### **Association Between Socio-Demographic Variables and Media Context**

#### **Gender and Place of Residence**

The Chi-square test examining the relationship between gender and residence ( $\chi^2 = 3.2095$ ,  $p = 0.201$ ) indicates no statistically significant association. This suggests that male and female respondents are similarly distributed across urban and rural areas.

This finding ensures that the sample is demographically balanced in terms of gender distribution across locations. Therefore, any observed differences in media perception or engagement cannot be attributed to locational bias. In the context of the study, this neutrality strengthens the validity of subsequent comparisons related to gender-based media behaviour.

#### **Education and Area (Urban–Rural)**

A statistically significant association is found between education level and area of residence ( $\chi^2 = 14.8922$ ,  $p = 0.005$ ).

This result indicates that educational attainment varies significantly between urban and rural respondents. Typically, urban populations tend to have higher levels of education compared to rural populations. This has direct implications for media consumption and perception patterns.

From the perspective of the study objectives, education becomes a critical factor influencing:

- Perceived credibility of different media forms
- Trust in citizen journalism versus mainstream media
- Ability to critically evaluate information

This finding aligns with the research question concerning audience perception, suggesting that variations in trust and influence across media types may be partially explained by educational disparities. It also reinforces the relevance of the Uses and Gratifications Theory, where audience characteristics shape media choice and interpretation.

### Understanding the purpose of the following tables

This study aims to examine:

- Audience perception (trust, credibility, influence)
- Differences across groups (gender, education, location)
- Influence of citizen journalism (CJ) and community radio (CR) on mainstream media

These tables test whether differences between groups are meaningful or just random.

So, the following Tables 4 and 5 interpret survey results in light of the research objectives and questions (especially: audience perception, influence, credibility, and media interaction).

**Table 4 Chi-square Tests**

Variables	$\chi^2$ (df)	p-value*
Gender × Residence	3.2095(2)	0.201
Education × Area	14.8922(4)	0.005
CJ platform × Medium influence	4.3421(8)	0.825
Influence source × Verification method	9.8724 (9)	0.361

\*N. B: P-value below 0.05 refers to 'significant' and P-value above 0.05 refers to 'not significant'.

### Table 4: Chi-square Tests (Relationships Between Variables)

This table checks whether two categorical variables are related (e.g., gender vs residence).

#### 4.1 Gender × Residence

- Result:  $\chi^2 = 3.2095$ ,  $p = 0.201$
- Interpretation:
  - Since  $p > 0.05$ , there is no significant relationship.

##### Meaning (Simple):

- Male and female respondents are similarly distributed across urban/rural areas
- Gender does not influence where respondents live

##### Link to Research:

- Ensures the sample is balanced
- Gender differences found later are not due to location bias

#### 4.2 Education × Area

- Result:  $\chi^2 = 14.8922$ ,  $p = 0.005$
- Interpretation:
  - Since  $p < 0.05$ , this relationship is statistically significant

##### Meaning (simple):

- Education level differs between urban and rural areas
- Likely:
  - Urban → more highly educated
  - Rural → relatively lower education

##### Link to Research:

This is very important for the objectives:

- Audience perception of:
  - credibility
  - trust
  - influence
- ✓ May be shaped by education level

Example:

- Educated audiences may trust mainstream media more
- Less educated audiences may rely more on community radio

#### 4.3 CJ Platform × Medium Influence

- ✓ Result:  $\chi^2 = 4.3421$ ,  $p = 0.825$  (Not significant)

##### Meaning (Simple):

- The type of citizen journalism platform (e.g., Facebook, YouTube) does not significantly affect perceived influence on mainstream media

### Interpretation in Context:

- Citizen journalism exists across platforms
- But no specific platform dominates influence

### Link to Research Question:

“How does citizen journalism influence mainstream media?”

- Answer from data:
  - Influence exists, but not platform-dependent
  - Suggests influence is event-driven, not platform-driven

### 4.4 Influence Source × Verification Method

- ✓ Result:  $\chi^2 = 9.8724$ ,  $p = 0.361$  (Not significant)

### Meaning (Simple):

- People do not change how they verify information based on the source

### Example:

- Whether news comes from:
  - citizen journalism
  - community radio
  - mainstream media
- verification behaviour stays similar

### Link to Research:

- Important for media literacy and trust
- Suggests:
  - Verification is a general habit, not source-specific

## Influence of Citizen Journalism and Information Verification Behaviour

### Citizen Journalism Platform and Perceived Influence

The association between citizen journalism platforms and their perceived influence on mainstream media is not statistically significant ( $\chi^2 = 4.3421$ ,  $p = 0.825$ ).

This suggests that no particular platform (e.g., social media channels) dominates in influencing mainstream media. Instead, the influence of citizen journalism appears to be independent of the platform used.

In relation to the research objective of examining the impact of citizen journalism on mainstream media, this finding implies that influence is not structurally embedded within

specific platforms. Rather, it is likely situational—dependent on the nature of events, content virality, or public relevance.

This supports the Framing Theory perspective, where influence is driven more by how issues are framed and amplified than by the medium itself.

**Source of Influence and Verification Method**

The Chi-square test reveals no significant relationship between the source of influence and the method of information verification ( $\chi^2 = 9.8724, p = 0.361$ ).

This indicates that respondents do not significantly alter their verification behavior based on whether information originates from citizen journalism, community radio, or mainstream media.

This finding is particularly relevant to understanding audience behavior and media literacy. It suggests that verification practices are relatively uniform and may reflect a generalized awareness of misinformation risks rather than source-specific skepticism.

In terms of the study’s objectives, this points to a growing culture of cautious media consumption, although it also raises concerns about whether audiences adequately differentiate between sources of varying credibility.

**Overall Interpretation in the Context of Citizen Journalism**

Taken together, the findings reveal that citizen journalism is increasingly shaped by social media dependence, moderate public participation, framing influence, and selective audience engagement. Facebook remains the most powerful platform, participation is common yet occasional, and citizen journalism significantly shapes how people understand problems and solutions. This confirms that citizen journalism has evolved into an influential alternative public sphere in contemporary society.

**Table 5 Mann–Whitney U Tests by Gender**

Variable	z	p-value*
CJ Regular exposure	-0.624	0.5329
CJ Following content	2.509	0.0121
Community Radio coverage accuracy	-1.475	0.1402

\*N. B: P-value below 0.05 refers to ‘significant’ and P-value above 0.05 refers to ‘not significant’.

### **Table 5: Mann–Whitney U Test (Gender Differences)**

This test compares male vs female perceptions/behaviours

#### **5.1 Regular Exposure**

- $z = -0.624$ ,  $p = 0.5329$  (Not significant)

**Meaning (simple):** Men and women consume media equally

**Research Link:** No gender gap in media access

#### **Explanation:**

The analysis shows no significant difference between male and female respondents in terms of regular media exposure ( $z = -0.624$ ,  $p = 0.5329$ ).

This indicates that access to media is relatively equal across genders. Both male and female respondents are similarly engaged in consuming media content.

This finding supports the notion of increasing media accessibility and inclusivity in Bangladesh, reflecting broader technological penetration and digital expansion.

#### **5.2 Following Content**

- $z = 2.509$ ,  $p = 0.0121$  (Significant difference)

**Meaning (simple):**

- Men and women differ in how actively they follow content

**Interpretation:**

- One gender (likely males in many contexts) follows news more actively
- Or one group engages more deeply

**Link to Research:**

This is crucial for:

- audience perception and engagement

Suggests:

- Media strategies may need gender-sensitive approaches

**Explanation:**

A statistically significant difference is observed in terms of the following media content ( $z = 2.509$ ,  $p = 0.0121$ ). This indicates that although access to media is equal, engagement

levels differ between genders. One group shows a stronger tendency to actively engage with content.

From a research perspective, this distinction is important. It suggests that media influence is not solely determined by exposure but also by the depth of engagement. This has implications for how different demographic groups interpret and respond to media messages.

This finding aligns with the study's objective of understanding audience perception and engagement, indicating the need for gender-sensitive media strategies.

### **5.3 Radio Coverage Accuracy**

- $z = -1.475$ ,  $p = 0.1402$  (Not significant)

#### **Meaning (simple):**

- Both genders trust community radio equally

#### **Link:**

- Strong indicator of the universal credibility of community radio

#### **Explanation:**

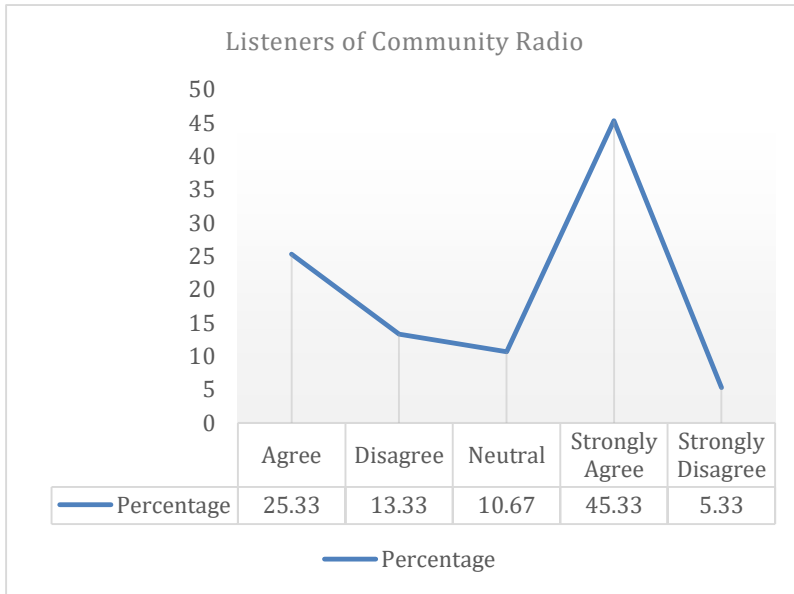
It shows that no significant gender difference is found in the perception of community radio coverage accuracy ( $z = -1.475$ ,  $p = 0.1402$ ).

This indicates a consistent level of trust in community radio across both male and female respondents. Community radio is perceived as equally credible regardless of gender.

### **Listeners of Community Radio**

The line chart shows that a large proportion of respondents (45.33%) strongly agree that they regularly listen to community radio, such as Radio Bikrampur and Radio Padma, for receiving daily updates. This indicates that community radio plays an important role in their daily information consumption and is considered credible and trustworthy by the listeners. On the other hand, only a small proportion of respondents (5.33%) strongly disagree with this statement, suggesting that very few respondents do not rely on community radio for updates. Meanwhile, 10.67% of respondents remain neutral about their listening habits, indicating that they neither strongly agree nor disagree with the use of community radio for information purposes.

**Figure 5 Listeners of community radio**



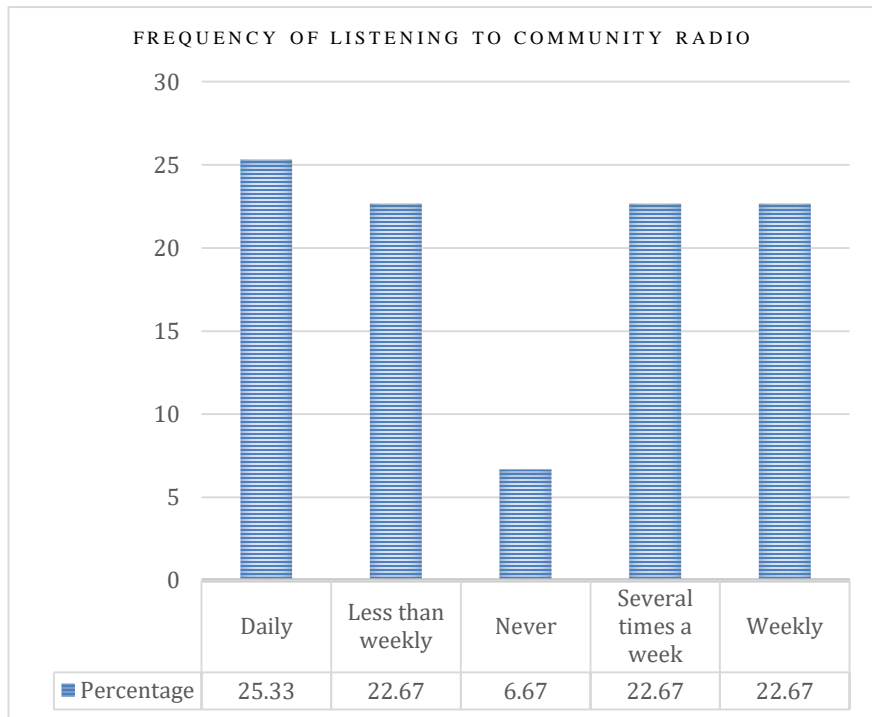
**Frequency of Listening to Community Radio**

The bar chart illustrates the frequency with which respondents listen to community radio. It shows that 25.33% of respondents listen to community radio on a daily basis, indicating a relatively strong regular

audience. In contrast, only 6.67% of respondents reported never listening to community radio, suggesting that complete disengagement from this medium is rare.

Furthermore, the data reveal that 22.67% of respondents listen to community radio several times a week, while an equal proportion (22.67%) listen weekly. Additionally, 22.67% of respondents fall into the category of listening less than weekly, showing a more irregular pattern of engagement.

**Figure 6 Frequency of community radio listening**



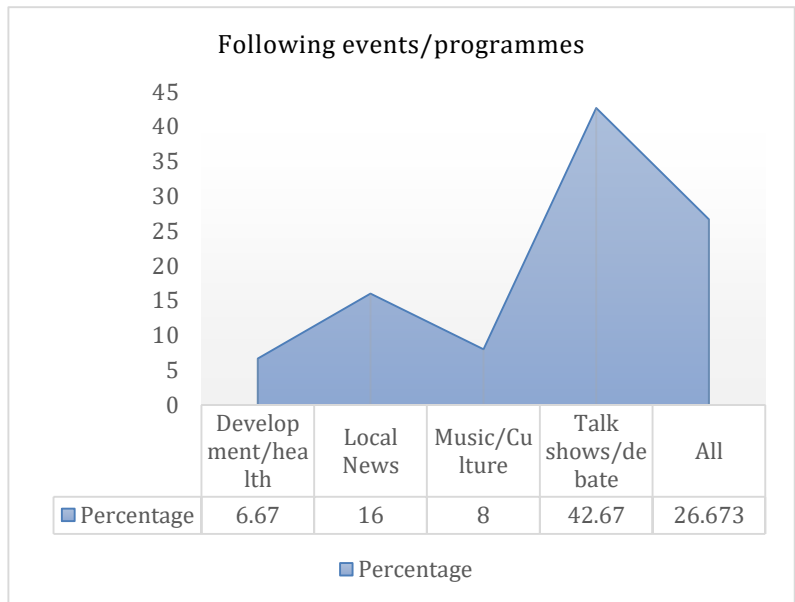
Overall, the findings suggest that despite the increasing availability and popularity of social media platforms, a considerable proportion of people continue to rely on and engage with community radio. This indicates that community radio remains relevant and credible as a trusted source of information within the community.

**Following programmes and events**

The data shows that the maximum number of respondents (42.67%) listen to talk shows and debate programs. In comparison, 16.00% of respondents prefer listening to local news, while only 8.00% listen mainly to music and cultural programs. Additionally, 26.67% of respondents reported that they

**Figure 7 Events/programmes following**

listen to all types of programs. This indicates that a significant portion of the audience is highly engaged with talk shows and debate-based content, while a considerable group prefers a mix of different program types. Overall, it suggests that community radio is quite popular in our country, and



listeners are familiar with and exposed to diverse types of information through its various programs.

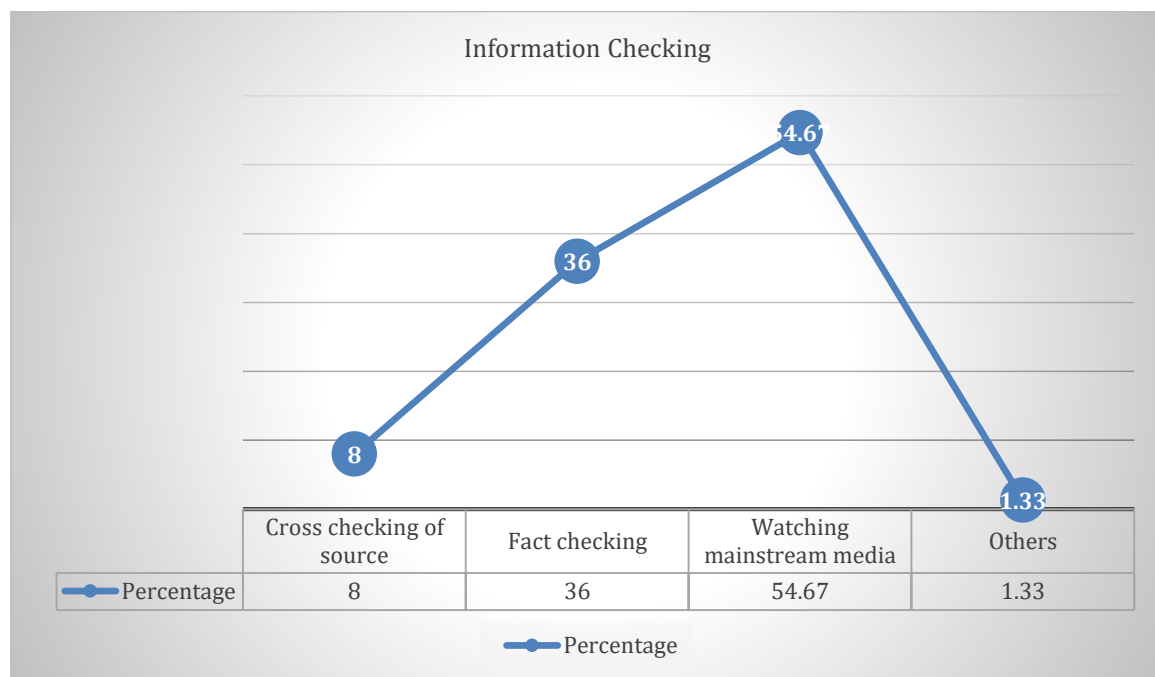
**Information Checking**

The graph illustrates the sources respondents use to verify or check information while listening to community radio. The findings reveal that the majority of respondents (54.67%) rely on mainstream media news to justify or verify information. This indicates that television, newspapers, or other established media platforms remain the primary reference point for credibility assessment.

In addition, 36.00% of respondents reported that they engage in fact-checking activities, showing a significant level of awareness and critical thinking among a portion of the audience. Meanwhile, only 8.00% stated that they use cross-checking of multiple sources, suggesting a relatively lower practice of comparing information across different platforms. A very small proportion (1.33%) mentioned other methods of verification.

Overall, the results suggest that while a majority of respondents still depend heavily on mainstream media for validating information, a considerable number are also actively engaged in fact-checking. This reflects a mixed pattern of media trust and verification behavior among community radio listeners.

Figure 8 Information checking



This finding reinforces the role of community radio as a trusted medium, particularly in delivering localised and relevant information. It supports the broader argument that community radio contributes positively to participatory communication and grassroots-level trust-building.

## Integrated Discussion in Light of Research Objectives

The quantitative findings provide several important insights when viewed collectively:

1. **Education as a Key Determinant:**

Education emerges as the most significant factor influencing media perception and behavior. Differences in educational attainment between urban and rural populations likely shape how audiences interpret credibility and influence.

2. **Limited Structural Influence of Citizen Journalism:**

The absence of a significant relationship between CJ platforms and influence suggests that citizen journalism affects mainstream media in a non-systematic manner. Its impact is likely episodic and driven by specific events rather than sustained institutional integration.

3. **Uniform Verification Behavior:**

The lack of variation in verification practices across sources indicates a generalized approach to information checking. While this may reflect increased awareness, it also suggests limited differentiation between media sources in terms of credibility assessment.

4. **Gender and Media Engagement:**

Although access to media is equal, differences in engagement highlight the importance of understanding audience behavior beyond mere exposure. Gender-based differences in content following may influence how media messages are internalized.

5. **Credibility of Community Radio:**

The consistent perception of community radio as accurate and trustworthy underscores its significance in the media landscape. It continues to serve as a reliable source of information, particularly for local communities.

## Key Insights

1. Education is the most important factor influencing media perception
2. Gender does not affect access, but affects engagement
3. Citizen journalism influence is inconsistent, not tied to specific platforms
4. Community radio enjoys stable trust across groups, with less coverage and influence
5. People verify information similarly regardless of source

## **Summary remarks about quantitative data findings**

The statistical analysis indicates that while demographic variables such as gender have limited influence on media exposure and perception, education plays a significant role in shaping audience differences. Citizen journalism does not exert platform-specific influence on mainstream media, suggesting that its impact is situational rather than structural. Community radio, however, demonstrates consistent credibility across demographic groups. Overall, the findings reveal a fragmented yet evolving media ecosystem in which influence exists but remains uneven and non-systematic.

## **Qualitative Data Presentation and Discussion**

After presenting quantitative data and analysis in the first part, the following sections will present qualitative data, and a discussion will be made accordingly. Presentation, discussions, and interpretations have been done in a thematic manner. However, the magnetic part of qualitative data has been presented here.

### **Qualitative Data: Key informant interview**

#### **Citizen Journalism in Bangladesh**

##### **Emergence and Technological Transformation**

The findings indicate that citizen journalism in Bangladesh has emerged primarily due to rapid technological advancements, particularly the expansion of internet access, smartphones, and social media platforms. The respondent emphasised that:

*“Citizen journalism has grown mainly because of the internet, smartphones, and social media, which allow people to share information instantly.”*

This suggests that the digital ecosystem has enabled decentralised news production, reducing reliance on traditional media institutions. The immediacy of information sharing has become a defining feature of this form of journalism.

##### **Changing Practices and Increased Participation**

The respondent highlighted a noticeable shift in public engagement with news production:

*“People are now more aware and actively involved in sharing information, and news spreads very quickly.”*

This reflects a transition from passive media consumption to active participation, where individuals contribute to news creation. However, the emphasis on speed often comes at the expense of verification and accuracy.

#### **Framing Characteristics of Citizen Journalism**

Citizen journalism tends to frame issues in a more personalised and emotional manner, often based on immediate experiences rather than structured editorial processes:

*“In many cases, citizen journalists present issues differently, based on what they see and feel.”*

This indicates a predominance of episodic framing, where specific (events) are highlighted without broader contextualisation. Such framing can amplify emotional responses but may lack analytical depth.

#### **Credibility and Trust Deficit**

A major concern identified is the lack of credibility associated with citizen journalism:

*“Citizen journalism mostly shares information on social media, but there is still a lack of trust.”*

The respondent further noted that although visual content enhances perceived authenticity, emerging technologies pose new risks:

*“Videos and images can build trust, but now AI-generated content is creating confusion.”*

This highlights a growing challenge in the media environment, where technological manipulation undermines audience trust.

#### **Audience Behaviour and Media Literacy**

Despite concerns about credibility, audiences are becoming increasingly critical:

*“People are now more aware. They may react quickly, but they also try to verify information.”*

This reflects a shift towards informed media consumption, where audiences balance engagement with scepticism.

#### **Influence on Mainstream Media**

Citizen journalism plays a limited but notable role in agenda setting. The respondent acknowledged:

*“In some cases, mainstream media follow issues raised by citizen journalism.”*

Examples such as rumours leading to social unrest or viral incidents demonstrate how citizen-generated content can shape public discourse. However, this influence remains inconsistent and dependent on verification by mainstream media.

### **Ethical Challenges and Professional Limitations**

The findings reveal significant ethical concerns:

*“In most cases, citizen journalism does not follow proper media ethics.”*

The lack of training and accountability leads to issues such as misinformation and bias, which can negatively impact the broader media ecosystem:

*“It creates a lack of trust in the overall media.”*

To address these challenges, the respondent suggested:

*“There should be awareness about media ethics, and mainstream media should verify information.”*

To improve citizen journalism, it is vital to promote digital literacy, establish effective fact-checking systems, and develop secure platforms that facilitate collaboration between professional journalists and citizen reporters.

## **Community Radio in Bangladesh**

### **Evolution and Current Status**

Community radio initially generated high expectations for grassroots communication. However, its influence appears to have declined:

*“At the beginning, community radio brought hope, but now its overall impact is decreasing.”*

Despite this, it continues to play an important role in certain local contexts.

### **Focus on Local Issues and Marginalised Voices**

A defining strength of community radio is its focus on local concerns:

*“Community radio mainly covers local issues that are important for the community.”*

This distinguishes it from mainstream media, which tends to prioritise national and international topics. As a result, community radio serves as a platform for marginalised and underrepresented voices.

### **Credibility and Community Trust**

Unlike citizen journalism, community radio enjoys relatively high trust among its audience:

*“Local people trust community radio because it talks about their own issues.”*

This trust is rooted in proximity, relevance, and familiarity, making it an effective medium for local communication.

### **Participatory Communication and Social Impact**

Community radio fosters engagement through awareness and dialogue:

*“It creates awareness and encourages people to think about local problems.”*

This demonstrates its role in promoting participatory communication and community-based problem-solving, aligning with development communication principles.

### **Limited Influence on Mainstream Media**

The respondent noted that community radio has minimal impact on mainstream media:

*“I do not see any major influence of community radio on mainstream media.”*

This suggests a weak vertical integration of local narratives into national media discourse.

### **Operational and Resource Constraints**

Community radio faces several structural challenges:

*“There are technical and financial problems, which affect performance.”*

These limitations often result in compromised content quality and reduced audience engagement:

*“Due to these challenges, the quality of programmes sometimes decreases.”*

### **Need for Capacity Building and Collaboration**

To enhance effectiveness, the respondent recommended:

*“There should be collaboration and sharing of experience between community radio and mainstream media.”*

This highlights the importance of institutional support and capacity development.

### **Focus group discussion**

Two Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were conducted to get a deep understanding of the impact of citizen journalism and community radio on mainstream media in Bangladesh. In Rajshahi, there were six participants from different age groups, including those aged 25–35 and 35+ years. Participation was voluntary, and all participants were assured anonymity, confidentiality, and the right to withdraw at any time. Another FGD was conducted at the

NIMC with the community radio personnel whose all were women. However, the discussion explored public perceptions and practical experiences about citizen journalism and community radio, and the findings are organized below under key themes.

### **Awareness and Instant Access to Information**

Participants demonstrated clear awareness of citizen journalism and recognized its growing presence in the digital communication environment. Most respondents emphasized that citizen journalism is valued primarily for providing immediate access to information, especially during emergencies, accidents, or unfolding social events.

Participants noted that information often appears on social media through ordinary citizens before mainstream media outlets report it.

One participant stated:

*“Through citizen journalism, we get news instantly. Many times, we know about an incident from Facebook before television channels report it.”*

Another respondent commented:

*“It is fast and accessible. Anyone with a mobile phone can share what is happening.”*

These views suggest that speed and accessibility are among the strongest public attractions of citizen journalism.

### **Credibility and Misinformation**

Although participants appreciated rapid information flow, they expressed strong concerns regarding credibility. Several respondents observed that citizen journalism often circulates unverified or incomplete information, making it difficult for audiences to immediately assess accuracy.

Participants explained that false information may later be corrected, but the damage caused in the initial stage can be substantial.

One participant remarked:

*“There is always a risk of misinformation. We may verify it later, but by then many people have already believed it.”*

Another added:

*“Anyone can post anything online. That is why trust becomes a problem.”*

The discussion indicates that credibility remains one of the most pressing challenges facing citizen journalism.

### **Defamation and Harm to Public Figures**

Participants were particularly concerned about damaging content involving well-known individuals, celebrities, or public figures. They observed that false allegations, edited images, or misleading narratives can spread rapidly, while correction or removal often takes much longer.

One respondent stated:

*“If a harmful image of a famous person is shared, it becomes very difficult to correct immediately.”*

Another participant noted:

*“Even if the truth comes later, people remember the first false news.”*

These responses reveal concerns about reputational harm and the irreversible consequences of viral misinformation.

### **Political Motives and Targeted Content**

Some participants believed that certain citizen journalism content is intentionally produced to target individuals or issues for political or personal purposes. They mentioned that verified Facebook pages, blogs, and online platforms are sometimes used strategically to influence public opinion.

One participant specifically commented:

*“The targeted issues are shared on verified Facebook pages or blogs with political motives or ill intentions.”*

Another respondent added:

*“Sometimes it is not journalism; it is a planned campaign against someone.”*

These statements suggest that citizen journalism may sometimes be used as a vehicle for political framing, agenda-setting, or character attacks.

### **Role in Highlighting Neglected Issues**

Despite criticism, participants unanimously acknowledged the constructive role of citizen journalism in raising issues that mainstream media often overlook. They noted that local

incidents, social injustice, corruption, and community concerns frequently gain initial visibility through citizen reporting.

One participant stated:

*“Citizen journalists bring attention to issues that mainstream media ignore.”*

Another respondent observed:

*“Many local problems become national discussions only after citizen journalists post them online.”*

These responses demonstrate the agenda-setting power of citizen journalism in contemporary society.

### **Privacy Concerns**

Privacy emerged as another significant concern. Participants believed that many citizen journalists fail to respect personal boundaries when reporting on accidents, crimes, family disputes, or sensitive human-interest stories.

One participant explained:

*“When human-related incidents happen, they often share photos and identities without permission.”*

Another added:

*“People’s suffering becomes content for social media.”*

These views indicate that privacy protection is often overlooked in citizen journalism practices.

### **Maintaining Media Ethics**

Participants widely agreed that many citizen journalists lack professional knowledge of media ethics. They identified problems such as sensationalism, one-sided reporting, lack of verification, and disregard for the consequences of publication.

One respondent stated:

*“Most citizen journalists do not know the ethics of journalism.”*

Another participant noted:

*“They post first and think later.”*

These comments suggest that ethical awareness and responsible content practices remain underdeveloped in many forms of citizen journalism.

### **Accountability Deficit**

The absence of accountability was considered one of the most serious weaknesses of citizen journalism. Participants stated that unlike mainstream media institutions, citizen journalists often operate without formal responsibility, regulation, or consequences for false reporting.

One participant remarked:

*“We have not heard that any citizen journalists are held accountable for their journalism.”*

Another added:

*“If they spread wrong information, usually nothing happens.”*

These responses indicate a public perception that citizen journalism lacks effective mechanisms of answerability and correction.

### **Overall Assessment**

Overall, the focus group participants offered a balanced evaluation of citizen journalism. They appreciated its speed, accessibility, and ability to highlight ignored issues, while also expressing serious concerns regarding credibility, political misuse, privacy violations, ethical shortcomings, and lack of accountability.

As one participant summarized:

*“Citizen journalism is useful and necessary, but it needs responsibility.”*

The findings suggest that citizen journalism possesses strong democratic potential, but its long-term legitimacy depends on improved ethical standards, stronger credibility, and clearer accountability mechanisms.

However, in the following sections, the discussion explored public perceptions and experiences regarding community radio, and the findings are presented below under major themes.

### **Understanding and Nature of Community Radio**

Participants generally described community radio as a locally based broadcasting medium that focuses on the needs and concerns of surrounding communities. They stated that

unlike national or commercial media, community radio addresses grassroots issues and serves local audiences directly.

One participant stated:

*“Community radio is a local station for local people. It talks about problems and needs of the community.”*

Another respondent commented:

*“It is closer to ordinary people because it broadcasts issues from our own area.”*

These responses indicate that participants perceive community radio as a people-centred and community-oriented communication platform.

### **Local Information and Development Role**

Participants emphasized that community radio plays an important developmental role by broadcasting practical and relevant local information. They mentioned topics such as weather forecasts, agriculture, health awareness, education, and social campaigns.

One participant noted:

*“Community radio gives useful information about weather, farming, health, and awareness programs.”*

Another added:

*“For villagers and farmers, these programs can be more useful than national media news.”*

These findings suggest that participants recognize community radio as an effective tool for local development communication and public awareness.

### **Credibility and Public Trust**

Credibility emerged as one of the strongest positive themes regarding community radio. Participants believed that community radio content is more trustworthy than citizen journalism because it follows institutional procedures and verifies information before broadcasting.

One respondent stated:

*“People trust community radio events without confusion.”*

Another participant observed:

*“Community radio is more credible than citizen journalism because it does not spread random information.”*

These views indicate that participants associate community radio with higher reliability, structured communication, and public confidence.

### **Accountability and Regulatory Oversight**

Participants highlighted that community radio operates under licenses issued by relevant authorities and therefore remains accountable to legal and regulatory frameworks. They contrasted this with citizen journalism, which they described as relatively free from formal obligations.

One participant explained:

*“Community radio is licensed and run under government rules, so it cannot do whatever it wants.”*

Another respondent commented:

*“Citizen journalists are free, but community radio has responsibility.”*

These responses suggest that formal regulation enhances the legitimacy and accountability of community radio in the eyes of the public.

### **Maintaining Media Ethics**

Participants also noted that community radio generally follows professional norms and ethical standards. They believed that because it functions as an organized institution, it is more careful about language, privacy, accuracy, and balanced presentation.

One participant remarked:

*“Community radio maintains media ethics more than citizen journalism.”*

Another added:

*“They are careful about what they broadcast because they have rules.”*

These findings indicate that participants link institutional structure with stronger ethical discipline in media practice.

### **Declining Youth Engagement**

Despite positive views, participants—particularly those below 25 years of age—reported limited engagement with community radio. They stated that young people rarely listen to radio programs, except occasionally for songs or entertainment.

One young participant said:

*“We rarely listen to community radio now.”*

Another added:

*“Sometimes we listen to songs, but not regular programs.”*

These comments suggest that community radio faces challenges in attracting younger audiences who increasingly prefer digital and mobile-based media platforms.

### **Changing Habits among Older Audiences**

Participants aged 35 and above shared nostalgic memories of listening to Bangladesh Betar (Radio Bangladesh), especially music programs such as *Durbar*. However, they noted that their listening habits have changed significantly over time.

One respondent stated:

*“Earlier, we used to listen to Bangladesh Betar, especially programs like Durbar.”*

Another participant added:

*“Now we are no longer interested in radio because songs are available everywhere.”*

These responses reflect a broader transition from traditional broadcasting to on-demand digital media consumption.

### **Competition from Digital Platforms**

Participants repeatedly mentioned that platforms such as YouTube and other online media now offer easier access to music, news, and entertainment. As a result, both community radio and Bangladesh Betar are perceived as less attractive than before.

One participant noted:

*“Songs are now available on YouTube, so the radio is not necessary.”*

Another respondent remarked:

*“Why wait for radio programs when everything is available online anytime?”*

These views indicate that digital disruption has reduced the entertainment value and habitual audience base of traditional radio media.

### **Technological Challenges**

The participants observed that they face technological challenges. One of the participants shared that:

*“In a storm, we cannot operate our radio station due to technological limitations. But it is time to air our programmes and share the latest information on taking action for local communities.”*

It indicates that community radio faces modern, sophisticated technological limitations.

### **Financial Challenges**

All participants reported financial difficulties. Basically, they do their jobs voluntarily. It is difficult to continue without financial support from their radio stations. They also mentioned that the revenue sources for their respective radio stations are quite limited, which negatively impacts the quality of their programmes.

### **Village Politics**

Some of the respondents observed that:

*“Although it is now widely practised, local elites sometimes try to capitalise on media content in their favour for political gain. It may be called ‘gaining village politics’ at the local level.”*

It indicates that sometimes community radio contents are influenced by local political elites for their political gain.

### **Lack of recognition**

The participants observed that the mainstream media pick their news or events without acknowledging the sources. One of the participants shared that:

*“All our information was used and aired on the national channel. They even use our photo without giving any credit or acknowledgement. They cropped our event photo.”*

However, another participant tells that:

*“when they ask to acknowledge the source, they do it.”*

It indicates that the community radio is struggling to gain sufficient recognition and acknowledgment.

## Overall Assessment

Overall, participants offered a mixed but insightful evaluation of community radio. They appreciated its local relevance, developmental contributions, credibility, accountability, and ethical standards. However, they also acknowledged its declining popularity, especially among younger generations who prefer digital alternatives.

As one participant summarized:

*“Community radio is trustworthy and useful, but it is losing audience because people have many faster options now. And, the social media makes it easier.”*

The findings suggest that community radio retains social value and institutional trust, yet its future sustainability may depend on modernization, digital integration, and stronger youth engagement strategies.

On the other hand, all FGD participants observed that training programmes offered by the NIMC enhance their professional skills. In the era of digital transformation, the NIMC can offer more training programmes to scale up their digital skills. Moreover, artificial intelligence now appears as one of the threatening factors in journalism. Considering this concern, the participants observed that the NIMC can also offer some training programmes about it.

## Content Analysis

This study also analyses the contents of two mainstream newspapers—namely, *Prothom Alo* and the *Daily Star*. One Bangla-language and another English-language national daily newspaper. These two dailies were followed for two months—February and March of 2026. These two dailies are popular and well-regarded for their quality and circulation nationwide.

However, following the news of these two dailies, it is hardly found that sources of citizen journalism or social media are cited in their reporting of news or events.

It is also disclosed in the focus group discussions that most mainstream media reporters are engaged in local community radio. As a result, they do not cite community radio as the source. On the other hand, it is also revealed that the mainstream media uses information from social media as sources but does not acknowledge them. However, when talking to journalists, they claimed that social media can be at best the source of information. It

cannot be the sources of news because the social media does not maintain news standard or media ethics. *'So, we cannot cite them accordingly rather than taking information and we verified it in several ways for preparing a news item.'*

For example, the measles case first appeared on social media. Later, mainstream media vibrates it, drawing attention of the policymakers.

In a brief elaboration, the emergence of the measles case on social media serves as a striking illustration of how information can travel and escalate in today's digital age. Initially, this case might have been shared among individuals on platforms like Facebook, where personal experiences and alerts can quickly gain traction. Users circulated photos, outbreak reports, and personal stories that highlight the severity and implications of measles, especially given the disease's potential for serious health consequences. As this information gains visibility, it often catches the attention of mainstream media outlets. Journalists and news organizations closely monitor social media trends, and when a public health concern like measles begins to trend, they typically investigate further. This leads to more in-depth reporting, which often includes expert opinions, statistics, and broader context about vaccination rates and public health policies. The coverage by mainstream media amplifies the message, reaching a wider audience beyond social media users. Parents, educators, and healthcare professionals become more aware of the situation through news articles, television segments, or podcasts, potentially influencing their knowledge and attitudes toward vaccinations. Moreover, the buzz generated by both social media and mainstream media prompts policymakers to take action. Government officials and public health agencies feel urged to respond to the growing concern. This involves communicating the importance of vaccinations, organizing public awareness campaigns, and proposing new policies to increase vaccination rates. Ultimately, this dynamic illustrates the interconnected nature of social media and mainstream media in shaping public discourse and influencing health policy. It underscores the importance of accurate information dissemination and the role of various platforms in addressing public health challenges.

However, Prothom Alo offers citizen news (*Nagorik Sangbad*) for people interested in writing stories, news on various events, videos, photos, and so on.

On the other hand, during the content analysis period, the country was excited about the election and its aftermath. Therefore, there were no such remarkable issues that caught the mainstream media's attention and prompted widespread coverage later.

## Case study

To explore the impact of citizen journalism and community radio on the mainstream media in Bangladesh, this study examined the following case. It has already been revealed that citizen journalism has emerged as an alternative media, sharing instant information despite various limitations and challenges. As discussed previously, citizen journalism has an impact on the mainstream media depending on the issue. Therefore, an issue raised by the citizen journalists first has been taken as a case study in this research.

### Case Study

#### **The Measles Outbreak of 2026 in Bangladesh: The Pivotal Role of Citizen Journalism in Triggering Mainstream Media Coverage and Prompting National Policy Response**

This case study examines the 2026 measles outbreak in Bangladesh and illustrates how citizen-generated social media content served as a catalyst for mainstream media coverage and subsequent governmental action. The outbreak, which initially received limited official and mainstream attention, rapidly escalated in public discourse on platforms such as Facebook. The resulting pressure culminated in parliamentary discussion, ministerial briefing, and the launch of a nationwide vaccination campaign on 12 April 2026. The case highlights the growing influence of citizen journalism in public health emergencies within a developing-country context.

#### **Background**

Measles, a highly contagious viral disease, re-emerged as a significant public health threat in Bangladesh in early 2026. The first reported case originated in the Rohingya refugee camps in January 2026. Despite the potential for widespread transmission, the incident did not initially attract substantial coverage in mainstream media outlets. By late February and early March 2026, clusters of cases began appearing in several districts, including Chapainawabganj, Rajshahi, and Mymensingh.

#### **Chronology of Events and Information Dissemination**

The spread of information regarding the outbreak occurred in distinct stages rather than as a single, coordinated event. Initial reports surfaced primarily through social media channels. Local residents, particularly relatives and well-wishers of affected children, shared personal accounts, photographs, and descriptions of symptoms (including characteristic rashes) on Facebook. Health workers and local journalists also contributed sporadically by posting in relevant groups and pages, thereby amplifying community-level awareness.

A critical turning point occurred when reports of 33 child deaths within an 11-day period at Rajshahi Medical College Hospital gained widespread traction on social media. This single, high-visibility incident transformed fragmented local narratives

into a national issue. The momentum generated by citizen posts compelled mainstream media organisations to investigate and publish detailed reports, drawing upon official records and documenting the broader consequences of the outbreak.

### **Policy and Institutional Response**

Mainstream media coverage elevated the issue to the national policy agenda. The outbreak was subsequently discussed in Parliament, where the Honourable Minister of Health and Family Welfare briefed the House on the epidemiological situation and the measures already initiated by the Government. Recognising the urgency, the Government agency responsible for public health intensified its efforts and launched a nationwide vaccination campaign on 12 April 2026.

### **Analysis**

This case demonstrates the transformative capacity of citizen journalism in contemporary public health governance. Social media platforms served as an early-warning mechanism, bypassing initial delays in formal reporting channels. The staged dissemination—from localised posts to a nationally resonant incident—illustrated how digital networks can aggregate grassroots evidence and create sufficient public pressure to influence institutional responsiveness.

Importantly, the sequence of events underscores a constructive synergy between citizen-generated content, mainstream media, and state institutions. Rather than operating in opposition, these actors converged to produce a timely and effective policy outcome. The episode also reveals vulnerabilities in traditional surveillance and communication systems, particularly in early outbreak detection in remote or underserved areas, such as refugee camps and rural districts.

### **Conclusion and Implications for Policy**

The 2026 measles outbreak case study provides compelling evidence that citizen journalism can function as a powerful adjunct to formal public health systems. By accelerating awareness and driving accountability, digital platforms directly contributed to protecting children’s lives by rapidly mobilising vaccination resources.

#### **For policymakers, the case offers actionable insights:**

- Strengthening digital listening mechanisms within the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare to monitor social media for early signals of health emergencies;
- Developing protocols for rapid verification and integration of citizen-reported data into official response frameworks;
- Fostering partnerships with mainstream media to ensure accurate and responsible amplification of verified community concerns.

This experience underscores the importance of inclusive, technology-enabled communication strategies to safeguard public health and enhance government responsiveness in Bangladesh.

## Media Pluralism and Framing Dynamics

### Diversity of Media Frames

The findings suggest the coexistence of multiple framing sources:

- Citizen journalism provides alternative and rapid frames
- Community radio offers localised and participatory frames
- Mainstream media maintains dominant narratives

### Limited Transformative Impact

Despite this diversity, the respondents observed:

*“There is not much contribution to overall media pluralism.”*

This shows that alternative media have limited impact on dominant media structures, leading to fragmented instead of transformative pluralism.

### Integration Challenges

The lack of integration between different media forms remains a key issue. The respondents emphasised:

*“Training and proper systems are needed to integrate these platforms.”*

Integration challenges in the media landscape emphasise a significant barrier to optimising the strengths of various media forms, such as mainstream media, citizen journalism, and community radio. The lack of cohesion among these platforms can lead to fragmented narratives and hinder collective efforts to address community issues effectively.

However, the respondents focus on the following issues:

### Need for Training

One of the primary recommendations is the need for training programmes that focus on digital literacy, media ethics, and collaborative journalism. This would help bridge the knowledge gap between professional journalists and citizen journalists, improving the quality of content produced across platforms. Training can empower citizen reporters with the skills necessary to verify information, navigate ethical dilemmas, and understand the standards expected in journalistic practices. Additionally, certain technical trainings could enhance the production quality of community radio, ensuring that their broadcasts meet certain professional standards.

### **Establishing Proper Systems**

Implementing systems that encourage synergy between different media forms can improve overall media effectiveness. This includes developing shared platforms for content sharing and collaboration. Such systems could involve joint fact-checking initiatives, where community radio and citizen journalists collaborate with mainstream media to verify information before it is published. This collaboration can also foster trust, ensuring that the audience receives accurate and relevant information.

### **Cross-Platform Collaboration**

Encouraging cross-platform collaboration can enhance the reach and impact of local narratives in mainstream discourse. By establishing networks that facilitate the exchange of ideas and resources between media forms, communities can ensure that local issues are amplified in larger conversations. For example, mainstream media could feature stories from citizen journalists or community radio segments, providing a wider audience for local issues while enriching the content of mainstream narratives.

### **Feedback Mechanisms**

Moreover, effective integration requires feedback mechanisms that allow for ongoing dialogue between various media entities. Stakeholders should create forums where journalists, community members, and media organizations can discuss challenges, share insights, and collaborate on storytelling efforts. This can help in integrating the diverse perspectives offered by citizen journalism and community radio with mainstream narratives, ultimately enriching the media landscape.

### **Fostering Media Pluralism**

Lastly, integrating different media forms is essential to fostering media pluralism, where diverse voices and viewpoints contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of events and issues. By addressing the challenges of integration, the media landscape can move toward a more collaborative model that values the contributions of all its elements, thereby promoting a more informed and engaged public.

In summary, tackling the challenges of integration is vital for creating a media ecosystem that leverages the strengths of various platforms. Investing in training, establishing

supportive systems, encouraging collaboration, enhancing feedback processes, and fostering an environment of media pluralism can lead to a more cohesive and effective media environment.

### Summary of citizen journalism or social media journalism

Table 6 presents the positive aspects, negative aspects, and challenges of citizen journalism.

Table 6: Positive, negative aspects of citizen journalism and its challenges

<b>Positive Aspects of Citizen Journalism / Social Media Journalism</b>	<b>Negative Aspects of Citizen Journalism / Social Media Journalism</b>	<b>Challenges of Citizen Journalism / Social Media Journalism</b>
Provides instant access to news and information, often faster than mainstream media	High risk of misinformation and fake news spreading rapidly	Ensuring accuracy and fact-checking before publication
Enables ordinary citizens to report events directly from the scene	Unverified content may create panic or confusion	Building effective verification systems
Highlights local issues ignored by mainstream media	Defamatory or damaging content may harm public figures or individuals	Managing reputational harm and legal liability
Encourages participatory communication and democratic engagement	Can be used for political propaganda or targeted campaigns	Preventing political misuse and manipulation
Amplifies marginalised voices and underreported community concerns	Content may be biased, emotional, or one-sided	Maintaining objectivity and balanced reporting
Supports agenda-setting by forcing mainstream media to notice important issues	Often lacks editorial gatekeeping and professional oversight	Developing editorial standards without suppressing freedom
Promotes rapid mobilisation during crises, protests, disasters, or emergencies	Privacy violations through sharing photos, identities, or sensitive details without consent	Protecting privacy and personal rights
Increases media pluralism by diversifying information sources	Sensationalism often prioritises virality over truth	Reducing clickbait and sensational content culture
Low-cost and accessible journalism through smartphones and social media platforms	Anyone can publish anything regardless of competence or ethics	Improving media literacy among content creators

Encourages civic awareness and social accountability	Lack of trust and declining credibility among audiences	Restoring public trust and credibility
Creates interactive communication between audiences and content creators	AI-generated fake images/videos create confusion	Combating deep fakes and technological misinformation
Expands reach through Facebook, YouTube, blogs, and other digital platforms	Overdependence on algorithms may distort visibility of issues	Reducing platform dependency and algorithmic bias
Allows quick correction or follow-up through user interaction	False news often spreads faster than later corrections	Ensuring timely correction mechanisms
Useful source for preliminary leads for professional journalists	Can trigger mob reactions, outrage, or social unrest	Responsible moderation of viral content
Encourages grassroots storytelling and alternative narratives	Lack of accountability; many offenders face no consequences	Establishing accountability frameworks while preserving freedom of expression

### Summary of Community Radio: Positive Aspects, Negative Aspects, and Challenges of Community Radio

The following table 7 presents the positive, negative aspects of community radio and its challenges.

Table 7 Summary of the Community Radio: Positive, Negative and Challenges

Category	Identified Aspect	Explanation
<b>Positive Aspects of Community Radio</b>	Localized Broadcasting	Community radio is described as a locally based station that focuses on community-specific needs and concerns.
	Coverage of Practical Issues	It broadcasts useful information such as weather updates, agriculture, health matters, and awareness-related events.
	Public Service Orientation	Programs are designed to serve local people rather than purely commercial interests.
	Credibility	Participants perceived community radio as more credible than citizen journalism.
	Public Trust	People tend to trust information broadcast by community radio without confusion.

	Regulatory Legitimacy	It operates under licenses and authority of relevant regulatory bodies.
	Accountability	Since it is regulated, it is expected to follow legal responsibilities and broadcasting standards.
	Ethical Standards	Participants believed community radio upholds media ethics better than informal citizen journalism platforms.
<b>Negative Aspects of Community Radio</b>	Low Youth Engagement	Younger participants (below 25 years) reported that they rarely listen to community radio.
	Limited Entertainment Appeal	Youth listeners only occasionally tune in for songs rather than regular programs.
	Declining Listener Interest	Older participants stated they are no longer interested in listening to radio programs.
	Reduced Relevance	Community radio is perceived as less attractive in comparison with modern digital media platforms.
	Traditional Image	Radio is viewed by some participants as an older medium with less excitement or interactivity.
<b>Challenges of Community Radio</b>	Competition from Digital Platforms	YouTube and other online platforms now provide music and content on demand, reducing radio dependency.
	Retaining Younger Audiences	Community radio struggles to capture and maintain the attention of digitally oriented youth.
	Changing Media Consumption Habits	Audiences increasingly prefer mobile-based, visual, and interactive content.
	Need for Innovation	Community radio needs modern content strategies and digital integration to remain competitive.
	Sustainability of Listenership	Maintaining a stable audience base is becoming difficult over time.
	Balancing Information and Entertainment	It must provide useful community content while also being engaging enough to attract listeners.
<b>Strengths</b>	Credibility, trust, local usefulness, accountability, ethical broadcasting	

<b>Weaknesses</b>	Low coverage area, low youth interest, declining popularity, limited entertainment attraction
<b>Key Challenges</b>	Digital competition, audience retention, modernisation, relevance in new media era

## Key Findings Aligned with Framing Theory

### Analytical Framework: Framing Theory

Framing Theory explains how media actors select, emphasise, and present certain aspects of reality while downplaying others, thereby shaping audience interpretation. The present analysis applies the following core framing dimensions:

- **Problem Definition** (What is the issue?)
- **Causal Interpretation** (Who/what is responsible?)
- **Moral Evaluation** (What is right/wrong?)
- **Treatment Recommendation** (What should be done?)

Additionally, frame-building (media production processes) and frame-setting (audience interpretation) are used to interpret the findings.

### Citizen Journalism: Framing Analysis

#### Frame-Building in Citizen Journalism

##### Problem Definition

The informant suggests that citizen journalism defines issues in a rapid, event-driven manner, often prioritising immediacy over depth. Issues emerge organically through:

- Viral social media content
- Real-time incident reporting
- Personal observations

This indicates a decentralised and spontaneous framing process, unlike the structured editorial framing in mainstream media.

##### Causal Interpretation

Citizen journalists often imply causality implicitly rather than analytically. Causes are:

- Derived from visual evidence (videos/images)
- Influenced by public sentiment and speculation

This leads to fragmented or sometimes misleading causal frames, especially in cases of misinformation (e.g., mob violence triggered by rumours).

## **Moral Evaluation**

The framing tends to be:

- Emotion-driven and immediate
- Based on personal or collective outrage

However, due to limited professional training, moral judgments may lack balance, sometimes reinforcing panic or bias.

## **Treatment Recommendation**

Citizen journalism rarely provides structured solutions. Instead:

- It amplifies issues rather than resolving them
- It encourages public reaction and engagement

Thus, its role is more agenda-setting than solution-oriented.

## **Frame Characteristics**

### **Episodic vs. Thematic Framing**

Citizen journalism is predominantly:

- Episodic (focused on specific events)
- Lacks broader contextual or thematic analysis

## **Source of Frames**

Frames originate from:

- Individual experiences
- Social media dynamics
- Immediate visual documentation

This leads to bottom-up frame construction.

## **Frame-Setting (Audience Interpretation)**

The study reveals that:

- Audiences initially react quickly but are becoming more critical and verification-oriented
- Trust is conditional and declining, especially due to AI-generated misinformation

Thus, citizen journalism contributes to:

- High engagement
- But low institutional trust

## Interaction with Mainstream Media Frames

Citizen journalism occasionally:

- Triggers mainstream media coverage
- Serves as a preliminary information source

However, it does not consistently reshape dominant narratives. Instead:

- It acts as a supplementary framing influence

## Community Radio: Framing Analysis

### Frame-Building in Community Radio

#### Problem Definition

Community radio defines problems primarily in terms of:

- Local and community-specific issues
- Everyday concerns of rural populations

This reflects a contextualised and proximity-based framing approach.

#### Causal Interpretation

Causes are framed in relation to:

- Local governance
- Community conditions
- Immediate socio-economic realities

This creates clear but localised causal narratives.

#### Moral Evaluation

Community radio frames issues with:

- Community-oriented values
- Emphasis on collective well-being and social responsibility

This enhances its credibility among local audiences.

#### Treatment Recommendation

Unlike citizen journalism, community radio often:

- Promotes awareness and behavioural change
- Encourages community dialogue and problem-solving

Thus, it demonstrates a more solution-oriented framing approach.

### Frame Characteristics

#### Thematic vs. Episodic Framing

Community radio tends to:

- Combine episodic (local events) with thematic framing (ongoing issues)

### Source of Frames

Frames are shaped by:

- Local stakeholders
- Community participation
- Organisational guidelines

This results in semi-structured, participatory framing.

### Frame-Setting (Audience Interpretation)

The findings indicate that:

- Audiences perceive community radio as credible and trustworthy
- Interpretation is strongly influenced by local relevance

Thus, community radio achieves:

- High trust
- Moderate engagement limited by reach

### Interaction with Mainstream Media Frames

The study findings reveal:

- Minimal influence on mainstream media framing
- Limited upward flow of narratives

This reflects a weak frame diffusion effect from local to national levels.

The overall summary is shown in the following table 8.

Table 8 Comparative Framing Analysis Findings: At glance

Dimension	Citizen Journalism	Community Radio
Problem Definition	Immediate, event-driven	Localised, context-specific
Causal Interpretation	Implicit, sometimes speculative	Clear, locally grounded
Moral Evaluation	Emotional, sometimes unbalanced	Community-oriented and normative
Treatment Recommendation	Limited, reactive	Awareness and solution-focused
Frame Type	Episodic	Episodic + Thematic
Credibility	Low to moderate	High (locally)
Influence on Mainstream Media	Occasional	Minimal

## Discussion in Light of Framing Theory

The insights gained from this research provide a nuanced understanding of how different media forms contribute to narrative construction in today's hybrid media landscape. According to Framing Theory, the way information is presented (or "framed") significantly influences audience perception and interpretation. The findings indicate three distinct approaches to framing employed by citizen journalism, community radio, and mainstream media, each reflecting its unique characteristics and social functions.

### **Citizen Journalism and Bottom-Up Framing**

Citizen journalism exemplifies a bottom-up, episodic framing approach, where individuals share news driven by personal experiences and immediacy. This grassroots method empowers everyday citizens to narrate their stories, often filling gaps left by mainstream coverage. The immediacy of this format enables a reflection of real-time events, providing a sense of authenticity. However, while citizen journalism introduces diverse perspectives, it operates within the constraints of social media algorithms and platform biases, which can limit the visibility of specific narratives. This framing can thus enrich public discourse but also risks reinforcing echo chambers if not adequately balanced by critical media literacy.

### **Community Radio and Localised Thematic Framing**

In contrast, community radio employs a localised, thematic framing approach that prioritizes relevance to the community it serves. This form of media fosters engagement and participation, allowing diverse voices to contribute to local narratives and discuss issues important to their communities. By emphasizing thematic concerns, community radio stations can challenge dominant narratives by centering local perspectives and experiences that often go unheard in mainstream outlets. This localized focus not only enhances community cohesion but also encourages active citizenship, highlighting the role of media in promoting social change from the ground up.

### **Mainstream Media and Top-Down Control**

Mainstream media, on the other hand, maintains top-down control over dominant frames, shaping public understanding in a way that often aligns with institutional interests. This

power dynamic can lead to a homogenisation of narratives, as mainstream outlets tend to prioritise a few select frames that resonate with broader audiences or align with particular political or economic interests. While they have the resources and reach to address important issues, the potential for bias and gatekeeping remains substantial, thereby marginalising alternative voices found in citizen journalism and community radio.

### **A Hybrid Media Environment**

The interplay among these media forms creates a hybrid environment in which alternative frames coexist but often struggle to challenge established narratives. While citizen journalists and community radio can amplify underrepresented voices and perspectives, their impact is often mitigated by the overwhelming dominance of mainstream media. This hybrid environment requires critical engagement from audiences, who must navigate a complex media landscape and discern between competing narratives.

In conclusion, the framing approaches identified through this research not only reflect the operational dynamics of various media types but also contribute to the broader discourse on media representation and power. Understanding these dynamics through the lens of Framing Theory can enhance our awareness of how narratives are constructed in society and highlight the need for inclusive media practices that ensure diverse perspectives are heard and valued. Addressing these issues will be vital for fostering a more equitable and representative media landscape.

In summary, the findings reveal that:

- Citizen journalism operates through bottom-up, episodic framing, driven by immediacy and personal experience
- Community radio adopts a localised, thematic framing approach, emphasising community relevance
- Mainstream media retains top-down control over dominant frames

This creates a hybrid media environment where alternative frames exist but seldom challenge and impact on the established narratives.

## Implications for Framing Theory

The findings from the study's analysis highlight several critical areas of concern that demand attention. By interpreting these issues, it can be better understood the challenges at play and their implications for future decisions. This exploration will provide valuable insights that can guide effective problem-solving strategies.

### Hybrid Media Framing Environment

Bangladesh exhibits a hybrid framing ecosystem, where:

- Citizen journalism introduces bottom-up, rapid frames
- Community radio provides localised, participatory frames
- Mainstream media retains dominant narrative control
- 

### Frame Competition and Fragmentation

- Citizen journalism creates competing and fragmented frames
- Community radio reinforces localized consensus frames

### Credibility vs. Speed Trade-off

- Citizen journalism prioritises speed over credibility
- Community radio prioritises credibility over reach
- 

### Limited Frame Transformation

Neither citizen journalism nor community radio:

- Significantly redefines dominant national frames
- But both contribute to media pluralism at different levels

## Policy and Theoretical Implications

Based on framing constructs:

- **Frame-building improvement:**  
Training citizen journalists in ethics and verification can strengthen frame quality
- **Frame amplification:**  
Institutional support can help community radio scale its influence beyond local contexts.
- **Frame alignment:**  
Collaboration between mainstream media and alternative platforms can harmonise narratives.

### Summary remarks

The qualitative findings demonstrate that while citizen journalism and community radio contribute to media diversity in Bangladesh, their overall impact on mainstream media framing remains limited. Citizen journalism enhances participation but struggles with credibility, whereas community radio maintains trust but lacks broader influence.

Strengthening ethical standards, institutional support, and collaborative frameworks is essential for improving their role within the national media landscape.

### **Both Quantitative and Qualitative: Summary Findings Presentation, Analysis and Integrated Discussion**

This section presents and analyses both quantitative and qualitative findings to address the research objectives and questions concerning the impact of citizen journalism (CJ) and community radio (CR) on mainstream media in Bangladesh. A mixed-method approach has been employed to generate a comprehensive understanding of media dynamics by combining statistical patterns with in-depth experiential insights.

The quantitative findings provide measurable trends regarding audience perception, credibility, and influence, while the qualitative findings offer contextual explanations of those patterns. The integration of these two strands enables a more nuanced interpretation grounded in Framing Theory, which examines how different media construct and influence narratives.

#### **Quantitative Findings: Overview**

The statistical analysis reveals the following key patterns:

- Education significantly influences media perception
- Gender does not affect media exposure, but affects engagement
- Citizen journalism platforms do not significantly differ in influencing mainstream media
- Verification behavior is similar across different media sources
- Community radio enjoys consistent trust across demographic groups

These findings are further interpreted and validated through qualitative insights in the following sections.

#### **Qualitative Findings: Thematic Overview**

The qualitative analysis identifies several major themes:

- Technological expansion driving citizen journalism
- Rapid but less verified information flow
- Trust deficit in citizen journalism
- Strong local trust in community radio
- Limited but occasional influence of citizen journalism on mainstream media
- Minimal influence of community radio on mainstream media
- Structural and ethical challenges across alternative media

These themes provide explanatory depth to the quantitative results.

## Integrated Discussion

### Audience Perception, Credibility, and Trust

The quantitative findings indicate that community radio is perceived as equally accurate across genders, while qualitative data reveal that:

*“Community radio is trusted because it focuses on local issues and community needs”*

### Integrated Interpretation:

This convergence suggests that trust in community radio is rooted in proximity, relevance, and participatory communication, rather than demographic factors. From a Framing Theory perspective, community radio frames issues in a localized, relatable manner, thereby enhancing credibility.

In contrast, citizen journalism shows a credibility gap. While quantitative data do not show variation in verification behavior, qualitative findings highlight:

- Lack of trust
- Concerns about misinformation
- Influence of unverified content

### Conclusion:

- Community radio → high and stable trust
- Citizen journalism → high reach but low trust

### Influence on Mainstream Media

Quantitative analysis shows:

- No significant relationship between the citizen journalism platform and influence

Qualitative findings further clarify:

- Mainstream media follow citizen journalism only in specific cases

### Integrated Interpretation:

This indicates that the influence of citizen journalism is:

- Event-driven (e.g., viral incidents, crises)
- Selective (requires verification by mainstream media)
- Non-institutionalised

Community radio, on the other hand, shows:

- Minimal influence on mainstream media

### Media Pluralism and Structural Integration

The study finds that:

- Multiple media forms coexist
- But integration is weak

### From a Framing Theory perspective:

- Different media produce different frames
- But these frames do not merge into a unified discourse

## **Conclusion**

The integrated analysis reveals a complex and evolving media ecosystem in Bangladesh. While citizen journalism and community radio contribute to media diversity and participatory communication, their influence on mainstream media remains limited and uneven.

Citizen journalism plays a reactive and episodic role, occasionally shaping mainstream media agendas but lacking institutional stability and credibility. Community radio, in contrast, maintains strong local trust and participatory relevance, yet remains largely disconnected from national media structures.

Education emerges as the most critical factor shaping audience perception, while gender influences engagement rather than access. Although audiences are becoming more aware and cautious, verification practices remain generalized rather than source-specific.

Overall, the findings suggest that Bangladesh's media landscape is characterized by fragmented pluralism, where multiple voices exist but lack effective integration. To achieve a more inclusive and synergistic media environment, strategic interventions in media literacy, ethical standards, and institutional collaboration are essential.

## **Chapter Five**

### **Findings and Interpretation**

This chapter offers a refined analytical account of the study's findings, carefully aligning the analysis with the principles of Framing Theory. This approach allows us to explore the narratives and perspectives of the informants, providing a structured framework to understand how these individuals interpret and convey their experiences within a specific social and cultural setting. Framing Theory holds that how information is presented shapes perception and meaning. By adopting this theoretical lens, the goal is to identify the dominant frames that emerged from the study's data, highlighting how informants construct their realities and the broader implications of these constructions for discourse within the field. Through a detailed analysis of gathered data, the various frames used by participants, the contexts in which they appear, and their potential influence on audience understanding and engagement are examined. Presenting these findings aims to enhance understanding of the subjects and emphasise the importance of narrative framing in shaping perceptions and behaviours within our area of study. This chapter not only presents the analytical results but also opens the way for a deeper discussion of the relationship between individual experiences and collective understanding, reinforcing the central themes of our research. Therefore, readers are encouraged to engage with the nuanced insights contained within, woven into the framework of Framing Theory.

#### **Major Findings on Citizen Journalism**

##### **Technological Emergence and Expansion**

The findings reveal that citizen journalism in Bangladesh has expanded rapidly due to technological advancements, particularly the proliferation of internet access, smartphones, and social media platforms. These developments have enabled ordinary citizens to participate actively in news production and dissemination.

This transformation reflects a shift from centralised media control to decentralised communication, where individuals can generate and distribute content without institutional mediation.

### **Nature of Framing in Citizen Journalism**

Citizen journalism is characterised by episodic and experience-based framing. Content is often driven by immediate events, personal observations, and emotional responses rather than structured editorial guidelines.

Such framing prioritises speed and visibility over contextual depth, often resulting in fragmented narratives. While this enhances immediacy, it limits analytical richness and may lead to partial or biased representations.

### **Credibility and Trust Issues**

A significant finding is the credibility deficit associated with citizen journalism. Although it facilitates rapid information dissemination, audiences remain sceptical about its reliability. The increasing presence of manipulated or AI-generated content further exacerbates this issue.

However, audiences are gradually developing media literacy skills, engaging in verification practices before accepting information as credible.

### **Influence on Mainstream Media**

Citizen journalism plays a limited role in agenda setting. In certain instances, viral citizen-generated content draws the attention of mainstream media and influences coverage. However, such influence is neither consistent nor structurally embedded.

Mainstream media continues to function as the primary gatekeeper, verifying and legitimising information before dissemination.

### **Ethical and Professional Challenges**

The absence of formal training and institutional oversight leads to ethical challenges, including:

- Lack of fact-checking
- Lack of capacity to check misinformation
- Biased or emotionally driven reporting

These issues contribute to declining trust in the broader media ecosystem.

## Major Findings on Community Radio

### Evolution and Current Relevance

Community radio in Bangladesh initially emerged as a promising platform for grassroots communication. While it continues to serve local communities, its overall national influence has diminished over time.

### Framing of Local Issues

Community radio adopts a localised and thematic framing approach, focusing on issues directly relevant to community members. Unlike citizen journalism, it provides relatively structured and context-rich narratives.

This enables community radio to act as a bridge between information and local realities, addressing issues often overlooked by mainstream media.

### Credibility and Audience Engagement

The findings indicate that community radio enjoys high credibility among local audiences.

Trust is derived from:

- Proximity to the audience
- Relevance of content
- Familiarity with local context

It also promotes participatory communication, encouraging dialogue and collective problem-solving.

### Limited Influence on Mainstream Media

Despite its local effectiveness, community radio has minimal impact on mainstream media narratives. The flow of information remains largely horizontal (within communities) rather than vertical (towards national media).

### Operational and Structural Constraints

Community radio faces several challenges:

- Financial limitations
- Technical constraints
- Limited human resources

These factors affect content quality and restrict broader outreach.

### Comparative Framing Dynamics

The analysis reveals distinct framing patterns:

- **Citizen Journalism:** Rapid, episodic, and emotion-driven
- **Community Radio:** Localised, thematic, and participatory
- **Mainstream Media:** Structured, institutional, and dominant

This creates a multi-layered media environment, where different actors produce competing yet unequal frames.

However, the findings are presented at a glance in the following tables in line with the thematic areas.

### Synthesis Interpretation

The analysis of this study reveals a multi-layered media ecosystem:

- **Citizen Journalism** → Fast, decentralized, participatory but weak in credibility
- **Community Radio** → Localized, trusted, participatory but limited in scale
- **Mainstream Media** → Institutional, credible, powerful but selective and controlled

From a Framing Theory perspective:

- Citizen journalism represents bottom-up, experiential framing
- Mainstream media represents top-down, institutional framing
- Community radio operates as a hybrid (localised institutional framing)

### Summary Key Findings

The evolving media landscape reveals significant tensions between speed and credibility, as well as between voice and power. Various forms of journalism, including citizen journalism and community radio, play crucial roles in enhancing participation and local engagement, yet they grapple with issues of authority and reach. Meanwhile, mainstream media continues to wield considerable influence and shape national narratives, highlighting the complexities of media pluralism in an increasingly fragmented environment. It is like the following flow sentence:

**“Speed vs. Credibility” and “Voice vs. Power”**

**Key bullet points:**

- Citizen journalism provides a voice without authority
- Citizen journalism enhances participation but faces credibility challenges
- Community radio strengthens local engagement but lacks broader influence
- Community radio produces high trust but limited reach
- Both makes less impacts on mainstream media in reshaping policies
- Mainstream media retains authority without full inclusivity
- Mainstream media retains high influence and authority
- Mainstream media remains dominant in framing national narratives
- Media pluralism exists but is fragmented and uneven

## **Chapter Six**

### **Conclusions and Recommendations**

This study finds that citizen journalism and community radio play important yet limited roles in shaping Bangladesh's media landscape. While they contribute to increased participation and representation, their influence on mainstream media framing remains constrained.

Citizen journalism acts as a quick source of information but often lacks credibility and ethical consistency. Conversely, community radio functions as a trusted local platform, but structural constraints limit its reach and impact.

Overall, the media environment reflects a hybrid system in which alternative and mainstream media coexist but exert unequal influence.

#### **Policy Recommendations**

- Strengthening Ethical Standards in Citizen Journalism
- Introduce media literacy, fact-checking mechanisms, and ethics training programmes
- Encourage responsible content creation through awareness campaigns
- Develop guidelines for verifying digital content
- NIMC can play as a catalyst here

#### **Institutional Support for Community Radio**

- Provide financial and technical assistance
- Strengthen infrastructure and capacity-building initiatives
- Promote sustainability through policy support
- NIMC can play as a catalyst to promote capacity building

#### **Enhancing Collaboration Between Media Platforms**

- Establish formal partnerships between mainstream media and alternative platforms
- Create mechanisms for content sharing and verification
- Encourage joint training and professional exchanges
- NIMC can play as a catalyst here

### **Regulatory and Policy Framework Development**

- Consider light regulatory mechanisms for citizen journalism (e.g., voluntary registration)
- Develop policies to support community-based media development
- Ensure a balance between regulation and freedom of expression

### **Theoretical Contributions**

This study contributes to Framing Theory by demonstrating:

- The emergence of hybrid framing systems in digital media environments
- The coexistence of bottom-up and top-down framing processes
- The role of credibility in determining frame effectiveness

### **Areas for Future Research**

- Quantitative analysis of audience perception
- Impact of AI-generated content on media trust
- Longitudinal studies on media framing evolution

### **Final Remark**

For a more inclusive and effective media ecosystem in Bangladesh, it is essential to strengthen the credibility, capacity, and integration of citizen journalism and community radio while preserving the strengths of mainstream media.

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## Annexure-I Survey Questionnaire

### Title: Impact of Citizen Journalism and Community Radio on Mainstream Media: Bangladesh Perspective

#### Instruction to Respondents:

This questionnaire aims to gather your opinions on various media platforms in Bangladesh. Please answer honestly. There are no right or wrong answers. All responses will be kept confidential.

#### Section A: Respondent Information

1. Age: \_\_\_\_\_ years
2. Gender:  Male  Female
3. Highest Education Level:  
 No formal education  Primary  Secondary  Higher Secondary  Bachelor  
 Master  PhD
4. Residence:  Urban  Rural  Peri-urban
5. Monthly Household Income (BDT):  
 Below 10,000  10,000–29,999  30,000–59,999  60,000–99,999  100,000 or above
6. Ares:  Rajshahi Division  Dhaka division

#### Section B: Citizen Journalism

*(Citizen journalism refers to information, images, videos, and content that are produced and shared by ordinary citizens through social media, blogs, or other platforms.)*

1. I regularly come across citizen journalism content.  
1 = Strongly Disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree
2. I actively share or comment on citizen journalism posts/access citizen journalism.  
1=Facebook; 2=YouTube; 3=WhatsApp; 4=Twitter/X; 5=Blogs/Forums; 6=Other (specify)
3. How often do you actively share or comment on citizen journalism content?  
1=Never; 2=Rarely; 3=Sometimes; 4=Often; 5=Frequently
4. I follow specific citizen journalists or social media pages for news.  
1 = Strongly Disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree
5. I find citizen journalism to be a trustworthy source of news.  
1 = Strongly Disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree
6. Citizen journalism often provides timely information that mainstream media miss.  
1 = Strongly Disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree
7. I usually verify citizen journalism stories before I trust them.  
1 = Strongly Disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree
8. Citizen journalism tends to be biased or one-sided.

1 = Strongly Disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree

9. Stories from citizen journalists are often later covered by mainstream media.

1 = Strongly Disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree

10. Mainstream media adopt frames or perspectives used by citizen journalists.

1 = Strongly Disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree

11. Citizen journalism shapes public discussion on local issues.

1 = Strongly Disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree

12. Citizen journalism influences public discussion on important issues.

1 = Strongly Disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree

13. I have observed mainstream news changing their headlines or focus after citizen posts went viral.

1 = Strongly Disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree

14. I trust citizen journalism more when it includes photos or videos.

1 = Strongly Disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree

15. I trust citizen journalism more when the author is known or local.

1 = Strongly Disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree

16. I trust citizen journalism that cites experts or official sources.

1 = Strongly Disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree

17. After viewing citizen journalism content, I have taken civic actions (e.g., contacting authorities, attending events).

1 = Strongly Disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree

18. I sometimes prefer a citizen report over a mainstream news story on the same topic.

1 = Strongly Disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree

19. Citizen journalism helps me learn about local issues that mainstream media ignore.

1 = Strongly Disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree

20. Often citizen journalism overlooks the ethical standards of journalism.

1 = Strongly Disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree

21. Overall, citizen journalism improves the quality of public information, impacting mainstream media, in Bangladesh.

1 = Strongly Disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree

22. The way an issue is framed by citizen journalism changes how I think about who is responsible for the problem.

1 = Strongly Disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree

23. Citizen journalism frames make me more likely to attribute problems to local actors than national/elite actors/media.

1 = Strongly Disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree

24. Frames presented by citizen journalism influence what I see as appropriate solutions (community action vs. government action).

1 = Strongly Disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree

25. The emotional tone of frames in citizen journalism affects my reaction to issues more than mainstream news frames do.

1 = Strongly Disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree

### **Section C: Community Radio**

*(Community radio means local radio stations that produce locally relevant programs and news that involve community members in content creation.)*

1. I regularly listen to community radio programs.

1 = Strongly Disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree

2. How often do you listen to community radio?

1=Daily; 2=Several times a week; 3=Weekly; 4=Less than weekly; 5=Never

3. Which type of community radio program do you listen to most?

1=Local news; 2=Talk shows/debate; 3=Development/health; 4=Music/culture; 5=all

4. I find community radio a credible source of local news.

1 = Strongly Disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree

5. Community radio covers local issues more accurately than national media.

1 = Strongly Disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree

6. Community radio presents diverse perspectives and alternative frames (counter-frames to mainstream narratives).

1 = Strongly Disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree

7. Community radio is often emphasised toward local interest groups.

1 = Strongly Disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree

8. Stories or topics from community radio are sometimes covered by mainstream media.

1 = Strongly Disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree

9. Mainstream media sometimes adopt the frames used by community radio when covering local issues.

1 = Strongly Disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree

10. Community radio sets the local agenda by highlighting issues ignored by national outlets/media.

1 = Strongly Disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree

11. Mainstream journalists use community radio as a source for local stories.

1 = Strongly Disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree

12. Hearing local voices on community radio increases my trust/credibility for me.

1 = Strongly Disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree

13. Programs with expert or local support (GO-NGO) involvement seem more reliable.

1 = Strongly Disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree

14. Community radio is transparent about its sources and story production.

1 = Strongly Disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree

15. After hearing/listening to community radio, I have participated in local discussions or activities.

1 = Strongly Disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree

16. For local issues, I prefer community radio over mainstream media.

1 = Strongly Disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree

17. Community radio helps me become more aware of my rights, services and community services.

1 = Strongly Disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree

18. Do you find any ethical challenge faced by the community radio practitioners?

1=Yes 2=No

19. Overall, community radio strengthens local democracy and public participation, impacting mainstream media, in Bangladesh.

1 = Strongly Disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree

20. The way an issue is framed by community radio changes how I think about who is responsible for the problem.

1 = Strongly Disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree

21. Community radio frames make me more likely to attribute problems to local actors than national/elite actors/media.

1 = Strongly Disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree

22. Frames presented by community radio influence what I see as appropriate solutions (community action vs. government action).

1 = Strongly Disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree

23. The emotional tone of frames in community radio affects my reaction to issues more than mainstream news frames do.  
1 = Strongly Disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree
24. Compared with mainstream media, I trust citizen journalism more for local issues.  
1=Much less; 2=Less; 3=Neutral; 4=More; 5=Much more
25. Compared with mainstream media, I trust community radio more for local issues.  
1=Much less; 2=Less; 3=Neutral; 4=More; 5=Much more
26. Which medium (platform) influences your opinion most on local matters?  
1=Mainstream media; 2=Citizen journalism; 3=Community radio; 4=Social media influencers; 5=None/Other
27. How do you identify fake news?  
1=Cross checking of sources 2=Fact checking 3=Watching several mainstream media news 4=Other (please specify)
28. Have you ever attended any training/received information on how to verify news?  
1=Yes; 2=No
29. I find mainstream media to be a trustworthy source of news. (Trust related)  
1 = Strongly Disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree
30. Mainstream media rarely change frames based on grassroots media. (Adaptability related)  
1 = Strongly Disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree
31. Mainstream media effectively cover local issues. (Local issues coverage)  
1 = Strongly Disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree

## **Annexure-II Key Informant Interview (KII) Checklist**

### **Study Title: Impact of Citizen Journalism and Community Radio on Mainstream Media: Bangladesh Perspective**

(The following questionnaire is designed for in-depth interviews with editors, journalists, policymakers, community radio managers, and citizen journalists to explore how citizen journalism and community radio influence mainstream media in Bangladesh, in light of Framing Theory.)

#### **Section A: General Information (for both groups)**

1. Name of the respondent (optional): \_\_\_\_\_
2. Designation and organization: \_\_\_\_\_
3. Years of experience in media or communication: \_\_\_\_\_
4. Type of media engagement (mainstream/community / citizen / regulatory): \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Section B: Citizen Journalism**

##### **1. Evolution and Practice**

1. How would you describe the current landscape of citizen journalism in Bangladesh?
2. What key changes have occurred in citizen journalism practices over the past few years?
3. In your view, how do citizen journalists frame issues that are different from mainstream media coverage?

##### **2. Credibility and Audience Perception**

4. How do audiences generally perceive the credibility of citizen journalism compared to mainstream media?
5. What factors influence audience trust in citizen-generated content (e.g., authenticity, bias, transparency)?
6. Do you think citizen journalism has increased public engagement or participation in national or local issues? Please elaborate.

##### **3. Influence on Mainstream Media**

7. Have mainstream media outlets adapted or responded to frames introduced by citizen journalism?
8. Could you share any example where a citizen journalist's content or framing influenced mainstream reporting or public debate?
9. How do mainstream editors and journalists perceive content originating from citizen journalists?

##### **4. Ethical and Professional Challenges**

10. What are the major ethical or credibility challenges faced by citizen journalists in Bangladesh?

11. How do you think these challenges affect the overall image and influence of citizen journalism?

12. What kind of policy or institutional support could improve credibility and collaboration between citizen journalists and mainstream media?

### **5. Framing Theory Application**

13. How do citizen journalists choose which aspects of an issue to highlight or downplay in their reporting?

14. Do you think the framing used by citizen journalists challenges or reinforces dominant narratives from mainstream media?

15. How do audiences interpret or respond to the alternative frames provided by citizen journalism?

## **Section C: Community Radio**

### **1. Evolution and Practice**

1. How has community radio evolved in Bangladesh since its formal introduction in 2010?

2. What are the main content areas or issues typically framed by community radio stations?

3. How does community radio differ from mainstream media in representing local or marginalized voices?

### **2. Credibility and Audience Perception**

4. How do local audiences perceive the credibility and reliability of community radio compared to national mainstream outlets?

5. What makes community radio trustworthy or appealing to rural and marginalized audiences?

6. How does community radio encourage dialogue, participation, and problem-solving within communities?

### **3. Influence on Mainstream Media**

7. Have you observed any examples where issues first raised by community radio were later picked up or reframed by mainstream media?

8. To what extent do mainstream media integrate or ignore the narratives coming from community radio?

9. How does community radio influence mainstream media in framing on rural or development-related issues?

### **4. Ethical and Operational Challenges**

10. What ethical, technical, or financial challenges limit the effectiveness of community radio stations?

11. How do these challenges affect content quality and audience engagement?

12. What kinds of policy measures or partnerships could strengthen collaboration between community radio and mainstream media?

13. What kind of initiatives have been taken so far by your management (Community Radio) to enhance the internal skills of your workforce/manpower?

**5. Framing Theory Application**

14. How does your station decide what issues to emphasise or how to frame local stories?

15. Do you think community radio's framing of issues challenges elite or urban-centric media narratives?

16. How do community members interpret or act upon the frames presented through community radio broadcasts?

**Section D: Closing (overall evaluation)**

1. What do you think are the most significant contributions of citizen journalism/community radio to Bangladesh's media pluralism?

2. How can citizen journalism and community radio be better integrated into national media and policy frameworks?

3. Any additional comments or recommendations?

## Annexure-III FGD (Focus Group Discussion) Checklist

### **Study Title: Impact of Citizen Journalism and Community Radio on Mainstream Media: Bangladesh Perspective**

#### **Target Participants:**

(Practitioners of Community Radio and Citizen Journalism (8–10 participants per group)).

#### **A. FGD Information**

Date:

Venue:

Facilitator:

Note-taker:

Duration:

Number of Participants:

Group Composition (gender, occupation, age mix):

#### **Section B: Citizen Journalism**

- How has citizen journalism in Bangladesh evolved in terms of alternative media platforms and their practices?
- How do audiences perceive the credibility and influence of citizen journalism compared to mainstream media in Bangladesh?
- How does citizen journalism influence the practices and content of mainstream media in Bangladesh?
- What ethical and credibility challenges are encountered by citizen journalism in their news-gathering and dissemination processes?
- What strategic policy frameworks can enhance media pluralism and ensure sustainable synergy among all media sectors?

#### **Section C: Community Radio**

- How has community radio in Bangladesh evolved in terms of alternative media platforms and its practices?
- How do audiences perceive the credibility and influence of community radio compared to mainstream media in Bangladesh?
- How does community radio influence the practices and content of mainstream media in Bangladesh?
- What ethical and credibility challenges are encountered by community radio in their news-gathering and dissemination processes?
- What strategic policy frameworks can enhance media pluralism and ensure sustainable synergy among all media sectors?

#### **Section D: Overall evaluation**

- What do you think about the most significant contributions of citizen journalism/community radio to Bangladesh's media pluralism?
- How can citizen journalism and community radio be better integrated into national media and policy frameworks?
- Any additional comments or recommendations?

## Annexure-IV Findings at glance

### Citizen Journalism

#### Theme 1: Evolution and Practice

Sub-theme	Categories	Illustrative Meanings
<b>Technological Drivers</b>	Smartphone penetration; cheap internet; social media platforms	Citizen journalism is enabled by technological democratization, where “everyone becomes a broadcaster” and news is produced in real time.
<b>Decentralization of News</b>	Bypassing gatekeeping; 24/7 information flow	Traditional editorial control is weakened; information flows outside institutional filters, creating a decentralized media ecosystem.
<b>Youth Engagement</b>	Gen Z participation; digital storytelling	Youth act as primary drivers of content creation, shifting from passive consumers to active producers.
<b>Shift in Media Consumption</b>	Social media-first behavior; decline of scheduled media	Audiences increasingly consume “live” and raw content, reducing dependence on TV/radio bulletins.
<b>Nature of Practice</b>	Raw, immediate, personal	Citizen journalism is spontaneous, unstructured, and experiential, lacking formal editorial processes.

#### Theme 2: Credibility and Audience Perception

Sub-theme	Categories	Illustrative Meanings
<b>Trust Deficit</b>	Informality; lack of verification	Citizen journalism is widely perceived as less credible due to absence of professional standards.
<b>Visual Trust</b>	Videos/images as evidence	Visuals create perceived authenticity, though increasingly questioned due to AI manipulation.
<b>Dual Consumption Pattern</b>	Speed vs. verification	Audiences use citizen journalism for speed, but rely on mainstream media for confirmation.
<b>Authenticity Factor</b>	Transparency; non-bias	Trust increases when content appears authentic and unbiased.

### Theme 3: Influence on Mainstream Media

Sub-theme	Categories	Illustrative Meanings
<b>Conditional Influence</b>	Virality-driven uptake	Mainstream media responds only when issues gain mass attention.
<b>Source Function</b>	Tip-offs; raw material	Citizen journalism acts as a primary source or early warning system for newsrooms.
<b>Bottom-up Agenda Setting</b>	Citizen-led framing pressure	In some cases, citizens compel mainstream media coverage (e.g., viral incidents).
<b>Institutional Resistance</b>	Policy constraints; editorial control	State media and regulators show strong resistance to adopting citizen frames.
<b>Recognition Gap</b>	Lack of credit	Mainstream media often use citizen content without acknowledgment.

### Theme 4: Public Engagement

Sub-theme	Categories	Illustrative Meanings
<b>Awareness Creation</b>	Issue visibility; agenda attention	Citizen journalism effectively brings hidden issues into public discourse.
<b>Limited Civic Action</b>	“Noise” vs. participation	Engagement often remains discursive (comments, debates) rather than actionable.
<b>Trigger for Action</b>	Viral pressure on authorities	In some cases, viral content leads to policy or administrative responses.

### Theme 5: Ethical and Professional Challenges

Sub-theme	Categories	Illustrative Meanings
<b>Lack of Ethics</b>	No training; no accountability	Citizen journalists often lack knowledge of verification, privacy, and responsibility.
<b>Misinformation Risk</b>	Rumors; panic creation	Unverified content can trigger social unrest and misinformation crises.
<b>AI Threat</b>	Deep fakes; manipulated visuals	Emerging technologies undermine visual credibility and trust.
<b>Need for Capacity Building</b>	Training; awareness programs	Strong consensus on need for ethical training and institutional support.

### Theme 6: Framing Practices

Sub-theme	Categories	Illustrative Meanings
<b>Personal Framing</b>	Individual perspective; emotional narratives	Frames are shaped by first-hand experience, often subjective and emotionally driven.

<b>Interest-based Framing</b>	Likes, shares, virality	Content selection is influenced by attention economy logic (engagement-driven framing).
<b>Alternative Narratives</b>	Counter-elite framing; grassroots voice	Citizen journalists sometimes challenge elite/media narratives, framing issues as “people’s concerns.”
<b>Lack of Institutional Framing</b>	Absence of editorial policy	Unlike mainstream media, framing lacks structured guidelines and accountability mechanisms.

## Community Radio

### Theme 1: Evolution and Practice

<b>Sub-theme</b>	<b>Categories</b>	<b>Illustrative Meanings</b>
<b>Local Focus</b>	Agriculture; local issues; community events	Community radio operates as micro-level media, addressing localized needs.
<b>Marginalized Representation</b>	Rural voices; grassroots issues	It serves as a platform for underrepresented communities ignored by mainstream media.
<b>Niche Positioning</b>	Complementary role	Community radio fills gaps left by national media.
<b>Declining/Stable Influence</b>	Mixed perceptions	Some respondents perceive a decline in influence over time.

### Theme 2: Credibility and Audience Perception

<b>Sub-theme</b>	<b>Categories</b>	<b>Illustrative Meanings</b>
<b>High Local Trust</b>	Familiarity; relatability	Trust is built through proximity and shared identity.
<b>Formal Legitimacy</b>	Licensed media; ethical compliance	Being formal media enhances credibility compared to citizen journalism.
<b>Contextual Trust</b>	Issue-based reliance	Audiences trust CR for local issues, not national/global news.

### Theme 3: Influence on Mainstream Media

<b>Sub-theme</b>	<b>Categories</b>	<b>Illustrative Meanings</b>
<b>Minimal Influence</b>	Limited reach; local scope	CR has weak direct influence on national media agendas.

<b>Indirect Influence</b>	Shared correspondents; hidden flow	Influence may occur indirectly through journalists working across platforms.
<b>Selective Uptake</b>	Issue-based integration	Only high-impact local issues reach mainstream media.

#### Theme 4: Public Engagement

<b>Sub-theme</b>	<b>Categories</b>	<b>Illustrative Meanings</b>
<b>Participatory Communication</b>	Dialogue; community programs	CR fosters two-way communication and community dialogue.
<b>Awareness Building</b>	Education; local problem-solving	It promotes collective awareness and local action.
<b>Community Empowerment</b>	Ownership; local voice	Audiences feel ownership and involvement in content.

#### Theme 5: Ethical and Operational Challenges

<b>Sub-theme</b>	<b>Categories</b>	<b>Illustrative Meanings</b>
<b>Financial Constraints</b>	Limited revenue; sustainability issues	CR struggles with financial viability.
<b>Technical Limitations</b>	Equipment; infrastructure gaps	Limited resources affect broadcast quality and reach.
<b>Capacity Issues</b>	Training needs; skill gaps	Need for capacity development and institutional support.
<b>Collaboration Need</b>	Partnerships with mainstream media	Strong demand for integration through partnerships.

#### Theme 6: Framing Practices

<b>Sub-theme</b>	<b>Categories</b>	<b>Illustrative Meanings</b>
<b>Local Relevance Framing</b>	Community-centered issues; local importance; contextual relevance	Community radio frames issues based on immediate local relevance, prioritizing community needs, everyday problems, and grassroots realities rather than national agendas.
<b>Issue-based Framing</b>	Importance-driven selection; practical impact; problem-solving orientation	Framing decisions are guided by the significance of issues for local audiences, focusing on actionable and solution-oriented communication (e.g., agriculture, health, local infrastructure).
<b>Collective Framing</b>	Community voice; shared experiences;	Unlike individual-centric framing, community radio reflects collective interests and shared community

	participatory perspective	perspectives, emphasizing inclusivity and social cohesion.
<b>Contextual Interpretation</b>	Local context shaping meaning; audience familiarity	Audience understanding and interpretation of frames are strongly influenced by local socio-cultural context and lived experiences.
<b>Complementary Framing</b>	Filling gaps of mainstream media; micro-level narratives	Community radio frames issues that are ignored by mainstream media, complementing national narratives by adding localized depth rather than competing with them.
<b>Limited Counter-Framing</b>	Low challenge to dominant narratives; alignment with existing structures	Community radio generally does not strongly challenge mainstream or urban-centric narratives due to limited reach, resources, and strategic focus on local service delivery.
<b>Hybrid Institutional Framing</b>	Formal media ethics; local adaptability	As a licensed medium, community radio combines institutional framing (ethical, verified, regulated) with flexible adaptation to local realities, creating a hybrid framing model.

### Cross-cutting Themes (Framing Theory Insights)

Theme	Categories	Illustrative Meanings
<b>Institutional vs. Individual Framing</b>	Policy-driven vs. subjective framing	Mainstream media uses institutional framing, while citizen journalism relies on individual framing logic.
<b>Gatekeeping Transformation</b>	Weakening of traditional filters	Citizen journalism challenges but does not replace gatekeeping.
<b>Legitimacy Divide</b>	Formal vs. informal media	Credibility is strongly tied to institutional legitimacy and regulation.
<b>Media Power Dynamics</b>	Top-down vs. bottom-up influence	A power struggle exists between grassroots and institutional media actors.
<b>Information Disorder</b>	Misinformation; confusion	Rapid information flow creates epistemic uncertainty in audiences.
<b>Collaboration Imperative</b>	Training; integration frameworks	All stakeholders emphasize collaboration as the future pathway.